

the statements which have been made, because so far as I can learn, since the start of the session we have yet to have a considered statement as to what will happen in the event of a surprise attack which may or may not come to this country, but is still a possibility. After throwing away our defences and our friends, we cannot expect to get any in a day anywhere in Canada, since we chose to be an unmilitary power.

We have yet to have a considered statement on our side of the border as to what, in the event of a surprise attack, which may or may not come, our allies to the south will do for Canada. Announcements have already been made with regard to advance bases on the Pacific and the Atlantic for joint protection, with regard to the Alaska highway, and with regard to other matters which have been covered separately; but as far as I can see, apart from the minister's statement, we have not been given anything definite by the government as to our real position. I do not ask the minister to go into the matter to-day, but he has two colleagues in the other branches of the service, the navy and the air force, and I submit that some statement should be given to the committee later as to our strategy since we are, like the United States, a non-military power as yet in the making. I should like the minister to make a short radio address or statement later on this subject, telling the people what will be done along this line.

There is one other matter, a most important one, which I wish to bring to the attention of the committee and of the department at this time. I refer to shipment of parcels to prisoners of war in Italy, Germany and the far east. As we all know, in the last war the Red Cross did wonderful work, but their activities at the present time are naturally restricted, in the very nature of things, and in view of the changes in the war made every week. We are on the defensive yet. Yesterday, in Toronto, a representative of the Y.M.C.A.—he states that he is international secretary—contended that parcels were being given out by that organization and delayed. Has the government knowledge of it? At least, that is what I gather from his remarks as I read them in the press. What is the status in enemy countries? It seems to me that the first duty or function of the government is to its prisoners of war, itself, to see that this is done, no matter where they may be and not to leave it to any private organization entirely, although they have done so well. The situation is changing every day, with Laval in control. I have twenty-six questions which I have gleaned from the British newspapers

in less than the last six months and from the British *Hansard* as well, and I may say that in the last three months about thirteen or fourteen questions have been raised by government supporters in the British House of Commons all to the effect that parcels are not arriving and demanding government action, regulation and check up. Ships have been sunk at Lisbon and the way to Marseilles may be blocked. Taking these facts into account, and with the entry of Laval into affairs over there the mechanization and destruction in the air and at sea, and many other matters that tend to dislocation, numerous British members of parliament say that parcels are not reaching our soldiers who are prisoners. A list of camps has been given in the British house to the government there, and the camps are identified.

The whole situation as to Canadian prisoners in enemy and enemy-controlled countries, should be clarified, because a great many families are sending parcels, and it is of the utmost importance that they should reach our men, especially when we know that there is lack of medical attention, food, health regulations and other proper care in the theatres of war overseas and abuse of prisoners by a savage, barbarous foe. It is most difficult for any private organization to meet this situation with any status or right. Everyone in Canada appreciates the work that these private organizations are doing and have done. No criticism is ever intended. We all know what splendid work they did in the last war and in our camps in peace and war, but they cannot go as far in this war because conditions now are different from those in the last war. As I say, the situation is changing every day in Europe, Libya, the far east and elsewhere. The other day in the British House of Commons, the food administrator made an announcement, which I read in the London newspapers and *Hansard* in March. His remarks were reported in the British *Hansard*. He was proposing a policy with regard to parcels, and he stated that he was considering the restriction of parcels to the old country, first, for civilians, and second, in some instances, for the purpose of regulating supplies to soldiers on the continent and Britain. The reason given is the shortage of shipping and the extremely grave situation on the Atlantic having regard to the possibilities of a spring offensive of the axis powers and other matters of that sort. I do not ask the minister to go into this question to-day, because I want to see the resolution adopted if that is possible, but I hope he will be in a position in a few days to make a radio address or statement—I will give