

C 270128

## CANADA AND THE WAR

uncertainty. We must keep constantly in mind the possibility of attacks from the sea, on either coast; and in the air, from many points of the compass. Whatever contribution we can or could make outside of Canada would be seriously weakened, and might easily be destroyed, if we had neglected our own defences. Never forget that fact.

**The Charge of Unpreparedness.**

The Leader of the Opposition charges the government with "unpreparedness". Unpreparedness for what? Does he mean unpreparedness for national defence, or does he mean unpreparedness by Canada, in peace time, for active participation in war in Europe? If he means unpreparedness for the defence of Canada, his charges are untrue. If he means unpreparedness in peace time for active participation, by Canada, in a European war, in his anxiety to condemn the government, he forgets the facts and condemns himself. In peace time, he never advocated preparedness for a war in Europe. The government never advocated preparedness for a war in Europe. As a matter of fact, there was general agreement, both in this country and in Great Britain, that it would be extremely unlikely that Canadian expeditionary forces would again take part in a European war.

Today, Dr. Manion quite fails to distinguish between preparedness, in peace time, for national defence, and preparedness, in peace time, to send forces overseas. He knew the difference, however, when Parliament was in regular session in March, 1939. He knew the difference from March, 1939, to September, 1939, when Parliament met in war session. He knew the difference until an expeditionary force was already on its way overseas. He kept silent in peace time because he knew, as everyone listening to me knows, that neither Parliament nor the people would have supported ex-

C270129

## CANADA AND THE WAR

penditures, in peace time, to prepare for active participation by Canada in a European war.

It is perfectly true that we did not, in times of peace, budget for times of war. If we had, our measures would not have received the support of Parliament. By preparedness in peace time, the present government always meant, and always said it meant, preparedness to meet the possibility of attacks upon Canada in the event of war. The government repeatedly told Parliament that our peace time military expenditures were exclusively for the defence of Canada.

**Outstanding Features of Government's War Record.**

I propose now, as simply as I can, to tell you the main facts concerning the government's record in war.

Parliament was summoned on the 1st day of September, 1939. Britain declared war on September the third. I announced on the 1st of September that if Britain did declare war, the government would recommend to Parliament that Canada should stand at her side. We never doubted that Parliament would accept our policy. We, therefore, as I have already mentioned, entered into immediate consultation with the British government, in order to arrive without delay at a basis of co-operative action. We quickly reached an understanding about the things that had to be done at once. These I outlined to Parliament on September 8th.

**Earliest Measures of Co-operation—at Sea, on Land, and in the Air.**

The British government told us that we could render the greatest help by assisting in the naval and air defence of Newfoundland, Labrador, the French Islands in the Gulf, and