

Our answer has gone forth at the same time, that we see little advantage in discussing the political situation, or the military situation. * * * It would be a most suicidal policy for the Canadian people to go into any scheme of that nature. It would be the most suicidal policy that could be devised for Canada to enter into that vortex in which the nations of Europe—England included—are engaged at the present time, and which compels them to maintain great military armaments. * * * The principal item in the British budget is the expenses for naval and land armaments. * * * Now, my honorable friend (*) says that Canada should follow in the same course, that she should take part in the scheme of Imperial military defence. Sir, Canada is in a different position. Canada is a nation with an immense territory but with a sparse population of five and three-quarter millions of souls, scattered over an area of 3,000 miles in extent from east to west. The principal items in the budget of Canada are what? Public works, the development of the country, the construction of railways and harbors, the opening up of ways of transportation. This is the work to which we have to devote our energies, and I would look upon it as a crime to divert any part of that necessary expenditure to the supply of guns, cannon, and military armaments."

Bearing in mind that these are the words of the Premier of Canada; that they were intended as a declaration of Canadian policy in reply to a request from the United Kingdom to discuss military relations; and that no exception was taken to them, either by the leader of the opposition, who spoke in the same debate, or by other challenge, the pronouncement may be regarded as the formulation of a partial and tentative Monroe doctrine for Canada. And the question is: Shall it be accepted by the Canadian people? At the time of its enunciation it passed

(*) Mr. McLean, a private and somewhat independent member.