

The information we have obtained indicates that the most immediate and effective further means of co-operation would be a rapid expansion of air training, and of air and naval facilities, and the dispatch of trained air personnel. These measures we propose to institute immediately.

At the earliest possible moment I want to register my earnest protest against any such course. In 1899, when Canada offered a contingent for the South African war, the British authorities said: "We do not care to accept your untrained units as such. We are willing to take your companies and squadrons and intermix them with our own troops. They have not got sufficient training." Thereupon Sir Frederick Borden, our Minister of Militia at that time, stated in plain terms that in no circumstances would we dispatch the contingent from Canada unless it served as a united body commanded by its own officers. We took that strong ground, and the British Government accepted our terms. We sent regiment after regiment to South Africa, each serving under its own officers and wearing the Canadian uniform. Our troops added lustre to the military annals of our country.

In the Great War of 1914, when we offered to send over an expeditionary force, the British Government proposed that, as our men were so untrained, the best way to make use of them was to intermix our units with the British Army. Thereupon Sir Sam Hughes registered vigorous objection and said, "If the Canadian contingent goes at all it will go as a solid division under its own officers and wearing its own uniform." Again our soldiers worthily upheld the name of Canada, participating on equal terms with the other Allied armies.

To-day we have a similar proposition coming from the Government of Canada, that we shall train our air personnel and send them over to England to be swallowed up in the British Air Force, and appear in all undertakings as members of the British Air Force. I protest most vigorously against that proposal. I submit that we should train and equip the members of our Air Force and send them over as Canadian air men under our own Canadian officers and organization, to be maintained at the expense of this country. I have no doubt whatever that their achievements at the front will be of the highest order, as were the achievements of our air men in the last war, and that again they will add lustre to the annals of our Air Force. In the last war we dominated the British Air Force; our pilots were the best men it had; they were the leaders in all the fights that took place. But, as they were serving in

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the British Air Force, the name of Canada was not heard unless some man particularly distinguished himself. I protest strongly against sending men to serve in the British Air Force. Such action will not be approved of by our people. They will demand that our men go as formed bodies, that they wear the buttons and badges and uniforms of Canada, and serve as solid units of Canadians.

Now I want to draw attention to another matter which is urgent, because events are moving rapidly from day to day, and in our military efforts we are being committed to certain courses which in some respects are unsound. There are in Canada to-day several thousands of men who served in the late war and left the service, with various ranks, at ages ranging from twenty to twenty-five years. They are now, say, forty-five or less. After the war they re-established themselves, married, and reared families. During the past twenty years they have disclosed that they possess energy, initiative and capacity, and they have raised themselves to important and responsible positions in the financial, industrial, social and economic life of the country. In the vast majority of cases these men could afford neither the time nor the money to join the militia, and have done no military service since the war. I hope I shall be pardoned for mentioning the name of an individual. An example of the type of men I have in mind is Mr. David Sim, now Commissioner of Excise, who served in the First Canadian Infantry Battalion as a private soldier, and who was demobilized in that rank in 1919 at the age, say, of twenty-one. David Sim is now one of Canada's outstanding civil servants. Many of the men I have in mind left military service in the rank of lieutenant or captain, having commanded companies and held staff appointments with distinction. Notwithstanding their failure to serve in the militia since 1919, I venture to assert that by reason of their war experience and their success in civil life since the war they are of great military value to this country. Yet, in the scheme of mobilization which is being carried out to-day, they are completely overlooked. They are not in the picture at all. They constitute an element of outstanding military value which ought to be availed of in our military plan. Consequently I urge the Government to adopt some flexible system whereby this very excellent material, which otherwise is likely to be wholly wasted, may be brought into the service. It will be a scandal and an outrage if steps are not taken by the Government to make it available.