

tatingly state my approval of these policies. As a proof of my feeling towards my leaders I shall vote against the motion which condemns them.

This does not mean, however, that I favour an increase in the estimates of the Department of National Defence, I am entirely and unqualifiedly opposed to the suggested increase. I have always been an opponent of armaments, and I believe, at this hour, I would be remiss in my duty towards myself and towards my trusting constituents, were I to change my attitude. I feel that what I always fought against when it was proposed by our opponents, from 1911 to 1925, is not more acceptable now that the party, to which I am proud to belong, has been elected to office. It is all one to me that this increased military expenditure will be for defensive purposes in Canada alone, as we were assured by the right hon. the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King), the hon. Minister of National Defence (Mr. Mackenzie), the hon. Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe) and other leaders. I do not doubt their word; nor do I doubt their sincerity.

It is simply that, as a matter of principle, I do not see this thing in the same light as they do. I am opposed to armaments in any shape or form, because I am convinced—I may be wrong, I admit—that this expenditure is useless and cannot give us the protection that is expected, apparently. Moreover, the financial state of the country is such that we cannot afford to spend these sums to fight enemies who may never materialize. Finally, we do not know how far this movement will carry us in the years to come.

Economy is the watchword of the day: the government itself preaches economy. When we ask for certain grants for our constituencies we are told that the estimates have had to be pared down for reasons of economy; for instance, this year we are voting still less money for agriculture. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that we have no right to increase our military expenditure at a time when, for alleged reasons of economy, we are reducing the estimates of the Department of Agriculture, which should receive a larger share of public funds, seeing that the farming industry is sorely in need of money.

One thing puzzles me, perhaps without reason, but at any rate allow me to say frankly what is in my mind. After going through the estimates and listening to the explanations given us so far I find it quite obvious that the money we are asked to vote will for the most part, be spent on warships and on aeroplanes. These ships and 'planes will be bought in England. To me this appears to be an indirect contribution to the

British armament program. Why not keep this money in Canada, to give employment to our own shipyards, employ Canadian labour and lighten the burden of direct relief? I would even be willing, if I were convinced of the necessity for so doing, to vote for a larger increase in our military estimates, on conditions that the money were to be spent in Canada, for the benefit of our fellow citizens who ask for bread and who want to work for it.

I cannot for one instant doubt the word of the leaders of the Liberal party when they assure us that the money voted will be spent solely for the defence of Canada; but I cannot help the feeling and, so to say, the unshakable conviction, that in voting for these estimates we are being drawn into the military armaments movement, with the mother country and for her benefit.

And I add this: Can those who are defending us to-day, who are at the head of the national government, and are ever ready to stand guard over Canadian interests, give us the assurance that they will be here very long? I certainly hope they will be; but certainty in such matters is rather out of the question. And after they are gone, will those who take their place be in a position to give us such guarantees? There is a big question mark there, Mr. Speaker. Once the precedent has been established it can be appealed to, and then willy nilly we will have to bow to whatever fate is meted out to us, as a consequence of the responsibilities we are taking upon ourselves to-day.

Mr. Speaker, I may be wrong; and I hope with all my heart that the government has chosen the right road, that the future will justify the government's decision. I express this hope in all sincerity. But, once again, I cannot follow my party in this matter. I am opposed to any increase of military estimates, even for purely Canadian defence purposes, simply because I believe that such expenditure is useless, because nothing appears to justify any such increase, because the organization of our national defence has been sufficient up till now; and also because I see in this increase the first step in the realization of an armaments plan that some day, whether we wish it or not, will be used for other purposes than those proclaimed to-day.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that in acting as I do I am faithful to the trust of those who elected me to represent them here. I know that if they were here their attitude on this question would be the same as my own. Since they cannot all be here themselves they have sent me here as their spokesman. Hence my