

Germans to have their way without in my opinion sufficient protest, and, I believe, in the opinion of the subsequent governments of the United Kingdom. I feel it is no criticism whatever to bring out these few statements which I wish to put on the record with regard to those days. I think it is very important that we should remember what happened.

As I have said, in the election which returned the present British House of Commons the appeal was made to the electors on an external issue, and one of the appeals was made on the so-called peace ballot. I think this is important. It is well to remember the things which went on in those days and how easy it was for great populations to become lulled into a sense of the possibility of legislating themselves, by wishful thinking, out of danger. The peace ballot which was put out by the league of nations society was held in 1935. It is interesting to note the questions on the ballot:

1. Should Great Britain remain a member of the League of Nations?
2. Are you in favour of an all-round reduction of armaments by international agreement?
3. Are you in favour of the all-round abolition of international military and naval aircraft by international agreement?
4. Should the manufacture and sale of armaments for private profit be prohibited by international agreement?
5. Do you consider that if a nation insists on attacking another, the other nations should combine to compel it to stop by (a) economic and non-military measures and (b) if necessary, military measures?

The results, which surprised public opinion and certainly the government in England were these. The answers to the questions in the order in which I have given them were:

1. Yes: 11,090,000; No: 355,000.
2. Yes: 10,470,000; No: 862,000.
3. Yes: 9,533,000; No: 1,689,000.
4. Yes: 10,417,000; No: 775,000.
5. (a) Yes: 10,027,000; No: 635,000.  
(b) Yes: 6,784,000; No: 2,352,000.

The 5 (b) question was a significant one because it concerned the "attack" clause. Clause (b) was the one that asked whether they would stop it, if necessary, by military measures.

The final results were tabulated on June 29, 1935. The government went to the country on this manifesto which is a public document. The first three points of the manifesto were these:

1. The League of Nations will remain the key-stone of British foreign policy. Everything will be done to uphold the covenant and maintain and increase the efficiency of the league. Collective action alone can save us from a return to the system which resulted in war.

The Italo-Abyssinian dispute was the next item. It was dealt with as follows:

2. There will be no wavering in the present policy. Action will be collective not isolated. Any discussions offering hope of a just settlement will be furthered, providing they are within the framework of the league and acceptable to Italy, Abyssinia and the league itself.

Surely an amazing statement to make over an act of unprovoked aggression. Next, defence:

3. We must repair the gaps in our defences. The defence programme will be strictly confined to making the country and empire safe and to fulfil our obligations to the league.

Next, disarmament:

4. Efforts to attain a general limitation of armaments by international agreement will be unrelaxed.

The government was returned on that manifesto. There were more points to it, but these were the important aspects with regard to foreign matters, and the parts that affected us. Shortly after that, as history has shown, Ribbentrop was able to go back to Germany and tell Hitler that England would not fight. These were the facts.

Now let us see what happened with regard to the League of Nations. The election in 1936, I believe, was the turning point at which war became inevitable. It is possible that war might have been prevented by stern action in 1935, but from then on, war became as sure as night follows day. However, the policy of appeasement continued to an amazing degree. During 1936 the Italians overran Abyssinia and resorted to unimpeachable evidence, to the use of poison gas and the aerial bombardment of primitive tribes. In the Spanish war, where the overthrow of a properly elected government was brought about by the outrageous and brazen participation of the armed forces of both Germany and Italy, report after report showed that Germany was using in an experimental war her most modern equipment, thus gaining priceless experience. Democracies, particularly the United States and Great Britain, adhered to the fantastic policy of non-intervention, and actually, in the later stages of the war, prohibited their nationals from taking part in the struggle. Thus by stopping the slight help which was given to the legitimate government of the international brigade, we actually and directly aided the axis. The story of the proposed oil sanctions against Italy is too well known to need repetition. In 1935 the United Kingdom government negotiated the naval treaty with Germany allowing her to build up her naval strength to thirty-five per cent of that of the British navy. It is a sad phantasy now to recall that the government of the day con-