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then existing between France and Britain would be maintained throughout. The dispositions of armed forces and of naval forces were made in accordance with a plan of joint cooperation. France being defeated at an early stage of the war has altered all that situation, and altered it very, very much for the worse.

Not only has France ceased to be an ally, but as I have pointed out her possessions in other parts of the world have come to serve the purposes of the enemy rather than the purposes which they would have served under the alliance between those two countries. Indeed, as I have said, there has virtually ceased to be a French empire. There was also at the beginning of the war another empire of considerable importance and significance, the empire which Holland had in the far east. That Dutch empire has been overrun. The Netherlands themselves are overrun by the enemy and their possessions have been taken from them. The United States had its possessions in the far east, and in part those possessions have become the possessions of the enemy. The British empire existed in part as an empire in the far east. To-day part of that empire has been taken by the enemy while other parts of it are threatened as they have never been threatened before. In Africa, where there were large and important French possessions, Britain at the commencement of the war had hoped and expected to find the bases from which operations might take place which would serve effectively to meet any enemy whose forces had to be met on the Atlantic ocean or on the African mainland. There again the enemy has possession in large measure to-day, and one cannot say what the outcome of subsequent conflicts may be. No one can say what the word may be twenty-four hours hence of the increasing gravity of the situation in any part of the world. It is known that Britain has had to move many of her forces from one part of the empire to other parts of the empire and of the world in order to meet the situations that exist there. All along the way there has been to some extent a thinning of the defence forces of the vast British empire.

I mention and bring together these facts, just in the way one would gather them from the press of the day, in order to illustrate how wrong it would be that anyone should get the impression that the government, or this parliament, has in mind the possibility of an early termination of this war. The war has to be won before there can be any thought of reconstruction; and if the winning of the war is to include, as we hope it must, the

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

restoration of freedom to those parts of the world from which freedom has been taken away by aggressor nations, there is yet a vast task that lies ahead of the free nations of the world.

I stress this because I should like to remove altogether any impression that in constituting a committee of this house to study the problems of reconstruction, the government or anyone on this side of the house—or for that matter I hope I may say anyone in this House of Commons—entertains the illusion that at the present time we are anywhere within sight of the termination of the present war, or by any means certain as to its course, at least for the immediate present. I have not any doubt that if this year goes by successfully, as I believe it will, with the increased production of munitions and the increased power that will be brought together from the different united nations, ultimately the free nations will triumph. I believe they will; but before that moment is reached there is going to be a vastly different world from what we have ever known in the past, and, I believe, a world even vastly different from the world as we know it at the moment. That being the case I hope no impression will exist anywhere, either in this house or in this country, that the government entertains other than the most serious views of the very critical situation that exists in the world to-day.

I had another reason for rising this afternoon, Mr. Speaker. The night before last, when the present resolution was introduced, my hon. friend the leader of the opposition (Mr. Hanson) said that he thought the ministry should make some statement with respect to its war policy, particularly in relation to the territorial defence of Canada; the necessity for that defence has manifested itself in larger measure since the outbreak of the war with Japan. The hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Green) has spoken particularly of the situation as it has changed since the entry of Japan into the war. Since the opposition have stated their feeling that this particular resolution should not be allowed to pass until some further statement is made by the ministry, I thought it might facilitate the progress of the debate if I were, on behalf of the government, to make a statement this afternoon. But may I say at once to the hon. member for Lake Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker), who has just spoken, that I do not think the government should be taken to task for having brought down the war appropriation measure, and begun to discuss it immediately before the Easter recess. As a matter of fact, I think, had we

brought the measure down at an earlier stage and then attempted to crowd the measure through before the Easter recess, we might have been open to some degree of censure for failing to give the house more time and opportunity for full discussion on the most important measure the government has brought before the house. As matters stand, it seems to me that we have pretty well taken the right ground in the circumstances. We have brought to the attention of the house all the large financial measures of which the house will have to take cognizance during the session. Hon. members are in a position to know the entire programme; and they will have the benefit of the time afforded by the Easter recess to familiarize themselves with the various features of the proposed legislation, and also to consider the points which they think should be further discussed when we reassemble after Easter.

Speaking in the debate on the address, I outlined, I thought very fully, the war policy of the government, going into considerable detail with respect to the armed forces overseas—indeed, all forces on land, in the air and at sea. I outlined the progress that has been made in the production of munitions and supplies, as well as the government's programme with respect to the supply of food. In fact, as I recall it, I covered the entire field fairly comprehensively. I had thought that what was said at that time, and what was subsequently said by my colleagues, might have furnished sufficient information to have justified the passing of these interim supply resolutions without at this time any further detailed discussion. However, the request that the government should, if possible, give members before the Easter recess further information in regard to the development of its war policy is I think a reasonable one, particularly in so far as it relates to the defence of Canada itself, as the need of that defence has become more evident within the recent past. I shall accordingly now make a brief statement to the house of the further progress made by the government in the carrying out of its programme. May I say, however, that I did this in part yesterday when I spoke on the government's policy in respect to national selective service. I also at that time answered some of the questions which had previously been asked and I anticipated others. I hope that with what was said yesterday and what I may now say, hon. members of the house will have a fairly comprehensive understanding in their minds of the programme which the government has under way at this time.

The phenomenal successes of the Japanese in the southwestern Pacific have done more than all the Nazi successes in Europe to bring home to the people of Canada the reality of the danger to our own country in the present war. No one should seek to minimize that danger or the new sense of urgency it has brought with it. At the same time, it should not be permitted to destroy a true perspective. In actual geographical distance, in thousands of miles, the Japanese menace is much farther from Canada than the Nazi menace. In strategic terms, the probability of attacks upon our Atlantic coast and upon Newfoundland is as great as it is upon our Pacific coast. But for the shield which Britain constitutes, the danger to Canada from Europe would be far greater than the danger to Canada from the far east.

One of the most difficult decisions in waging war is the decision which must be made as to the disposition of fighting strength. Over and over again it is necessary to decide what proportion of total fighting strength should be sent to the front line to engage the enemy, and what proportion should be held in reserve to secure the base of operations and protect the lines of communication.

From the outset of the war the government has been attacked on this score from opposite extremes. At one extreme are those who would send every trained man and every available weapon overseas, without regard to the risk thereby incurred of exposing our own country to direct attack which nothing could be done to repel. At the other extreme are those who would keep every able-bodied man and every available weapon in Canada, without regard to the risk of allowing our allies and friends to be defeated, and thus exposing ourselves to the full fury of a triumphant enemy.

Both extremes are perilous. To adopt either might be fatal to the very existence of our country. Unless we take every reasonable precaution to maintain the territorial security of Canada, the enemy might, by sudden surprise attacks, do incalculable damage to the country. On the other hand, unless we take our full share of the combat and do our full part to defeat the enemy before he reaches our shores, we may be left practically alone to face his onslaughts.

Before the Japanese attacks were made on British and American territories in the Pacific, the insistence of the government upon the maintenance of a foundation for the actual physical defence of Canadian territory aroused in some quarters a good deal of impatience. The opposite tendency has been more in evidence since December 7. Canada will never enjoy permanent security until the axis powers