

we have debated this matter for two days and we are no clearer than we were before as to the position of Canada, in regard to foreign affairs. Yesterday also I paid tribute to your race for what they have done for Canada.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hour for private and public bills having expired, the house will revert to the business under consideration at six o'clock.

## SUPPLY

## EXTERNAL AFFAIRS—FOREIGN POLICY—STATEMENT OF PRIME MINISTER ON MOTION OF MINISTER OF FINANCE

The house resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Dunning for committee of supply.

Mr. COLDWELL: Mr. Speaker, the next blow at the League of Nations policy came with the failure of the disarmament conference which met in February, 1932. The representatives of the national government did little to ensure the success of that conference. For example, in the House of Lords in May 22, 1935, Lord Londonderry said:

In 1932, the disarmament conference assembled and almost its earliest discussions were centered around the possibility of the total abolition of air forces or at least of the abolition of the artillery of the air, the bombing aeroplane, which is the weapon which is the distinctive arm of the air force and to which it owes its separate existence. Through that period, difficult for any air minister and particularly for one who, like myself, has always been convinced of the prime importance of the maintenance of an effective air arm to the security of all this country, I kept impressing upon my colleagues and upon the country generally the vital nature and place of the Royal Air Force in the scheme of our defences.

I ask hon. members to note these words:

I had the utmost difficulty at that time, amid the public outcry, in preserving the use of the bombing airplane even on the frontiers of the middle east and India.

To-day the fear of the bombing plane makes London, and perhaps Londonderry shudder. The disarmament conference failed in spite of the fact that the United States actually offered to enter into an agreement for consultation with the league assembly on the basis of the Kellogg pact or any other common treaty in case of a threat to peace. They offered not to obstruct the application of economic sanctions against any nation which they agreed also was the aggressor. An agreement of this type would have stopped Japanese aggression and probably prevented the series of events and crises which have followed. Collective security was given a bitter blow.

[Mr. Church.]

Then came the rise of Hitler. I am not going to recount to-night the causes of that rise because they are generally known. May I say that they date to some extent from some of the injustices of the treaty of Versailles. But his rise was encouraged by powerful interests both within and without Germany. Indeed, his rise was welcomed in certain quarters by reactionary forces who regarded Hitler as a buttress against leftist movements in Europe. Germany's rearmament was a violation of the treaty, but it was condoned. I should like to quote the words of Sir Arthur Balfour, chairman and managing director of the Capital Steel Works, Sheffield, as reported on October 24, 1933. He said:

One of the greatest menaces to peace in Europe to-day is the totally unarmed condition of Germany.

Mr. Lloyd George said something of a similar nature about the same time. In 1935 there was reached with Hitler a naval agreement, which was a bilateral breach, on the part of Germany and the national government of Britain, of the same treaty. We well remember how France criticized that naval agreement. In 1935 Mussolini seized Ethiopia in violation of the covenant of the league, and Abyssinia's appeal to the league was disregarded. Again aggression paid. In my opinion, the result of Abyssinia was the destruction of the league, the formation of the Rome-Berlin axis, the remilitarization of the Rhineland and the subsequent fascist aggression in Spain. It seems to me that if at any point the great powers had been faithful to the league, economic pressure might have stopped the development of the situation which has brought us to the pass in which we find ourselves to-day.

The story of Spain is, I submit, a striking confirmation of the viewpoint that the fear by the vested interests in the European countries of a people's movement is greater than the fear of fascism. Under article 10 of the league covenant, which pledged members of the league to preserve against external aggression the territorial integrity and political independence of league members, it was the duty of all members of the league to supply the duly elected and legitimate government of Spain with all that was needed to put an end to foreign aggression. In December, 1936, the council of the league declared that any foreign intervention in Spain was contrary to international law and to article 10 of the covenant of the league. In spite of this a policy of non-intervention was followed by the democratic powers, with the result that the Spanish government has now been forced to capitulate to Franco and Spain is now in the hands

of people who wished to destroy democracy in Spain and throughout Europe. Before the league assembly in September, 1936, Mr. Eden confessed that the British government did not believe in intervening in ideological conflicts such as that which was occurring in Spain. Contrast that with the statement made by Sir Samuel Hoare in the British House of Commons on November 5, 1919, when he said:

I believe that a policy of no intervention is in principle a negation of everything that the League of Nations stands for. I believe that if the League of Nations is to develop and be a force in the world it will have to take sides between what it believes to be good and what it believes to be bad; and I believe that if it stood aside and allowed it to be thought that there was no difference between one faction and another faction in Russia, it would be doomed— . . . to sterility. . . . I do not believe that a policy of no intervention is possible.

That is what Sir Samuel Hoare said in regard to what might be termed an ideological conflict. Members of the old school of British imperialism like Churchill realized that a victory for the fascists would turn the Mediterranean into an Italian lake. Hence their opposition to Mr. Chamberlain's policy. To-day we are faced with the strange phenomena of people who are as far apart as the poles uniting more or less in criticism of that policy. To-day the threat that they feared has become a reality and General Franco controls Spain instead of the government which, on February 16, 1937, offered to enter into an agreement with the British and French governments giving them the use of Spain's ports and airdromes and allowing the transit of French troops in case of war. To-day France has a hostile force along her Spanish boundary.

A year ago Austria was allowed to pass into the hands of Hitler, and last September the eastern citadel of democracy in central Europe, Czechoslovakia, was sacrificed. I am going to state that I believe that at any time strict adherence to the league covenant would have stopped aggression and prevented war. Instead, we now have Hitler, Mussolini and Japan attempting to rule the world by force. If I judge the situation aright from some of the speeches that have been made in this house, we are going to forget all about these things and perhaps participate in war in the defence of Poland. Last September the league was in session, but Mr. Chamberlain chose to ignore it and endeavoured to achieve a four-power agreement instead. The Prime Minister of Canada called that "mediation" yesterday. Mediation between whom? The nation most concerned, Czechoslovakia, was

never present at the conference. The only mediation that took place was a discussion between those who were going to destroy her. Mr. Chamberlain was successful in bringing the four powers together and arranging the Munich agreement under which it was agreed that the Sudeten region should pass into the hands of Hitler. In reporting to parliament on October 6—I have the British *Hansard* on my desk—Mr. Chamberlain stated that Czechoslovakia had her boundaries guaranteed by Britain and France and thus was in a more satisfactory position than before.

A refusal at Munich to bow to the will of Hitler might have resulted in war, although this would seem to be unlikely since Hitler's chief of general staff and some of the high-ranking general officers subsequently were relieved of their commands because, it is said, they disagreed with the policy then pursued by Hitler. I believe, on the other hand, that had the League of Nations then in session been called upon to adjudicate, to marshal world opinion, that world opinion would have been sufficiently strong to prevent the aggression which was then contemplated. Someone may say "no" to that statement. May I say that the course followed resulted in the handing over to Hitler of one of the most highly fortified regions in Europe in the Sudeten mountains, and subsequently in, enabling him to take over one of the greatest munitions factories in the world and large quantities of war equipment, aeroplanes and materials, and as a result to-day the democratic powers, if you call them such, are in a more parlous state than they were in last September.

The sequel to all this occurred as recently as the fifteenth day of this month, when suddenly, in violation of every promise, the remainder of Czechoslovakia was seized. The point I am making is this, that the desertion of the principle of collective security all through these years by the government now in power in Great Britain has resulted in placing under Hitler Czechoslovakia with its fortifications, war materials and equipment, and the great Skoda munition factory. Since then, Mussolini has made some demands on France, and we have witnessed the smaller nations of Europe, such as Hungary, Roumania and others, running like frightened chicken to the shelter of the dictators.

My criticism of our own government is this, that to this policy throughout these years Canada has been a silent partner. We have just heard this evening discussion on a bill which is designed, not to declare neutrality