

I say, Mr. Speaker, that we have assumed too heavy a burden in this unfortunate adventure which I denounced in this house on September 9, 1939. I knew that our participation in the war would inevitably drag us into conscription. I did all in my power to save our youth from the application of this measure by opposing participation which was to give rise to conscription. In this critical hour, fraught with fearful consequences for Canada, I repeat—with all due deference to the hon. member for Beauharnois-Laprairie—that alone the hon. member for Quebec-Montmorency (Mr. LaCroix) supported me. Always frank, always loyal, always logical, he was again my sole support against conscription on June 19, 1940. If only the members who will vote against the confidence motion of the government now under discussion had supported my amendments against participation and against mobilization, we would have been spared this tragedy and my hon. friends would not now be compelled to express their lack of confidence in their own leader. I shall act as I always did. If I acted otherwise I would not be true to myself and I would belie my whole past.

Mr. Speaker, a moment ago the hon. member for Beauharnois-Laprairie recalled the hectic debate of September 9, 1939. It's an ill wind that blows nobody good and, unfortunately for the hon. member for Beauharnois-Laprairie, there are *Votes and Proceedings* of the House of Commons of Canada. Therefore, I quote from page 10 of the *Votes and Proceedings* of the House of Commons of Saturday, September 9, the following:

Mr. Lacombe, seconded by Mr. LaCroix (Quebec-Montmorency) moved in amendment:

That the following words be added to the address:

"That this house regrets that the government did not deem it fitting to advise His Excellency the Governor General that Canada should refrain from participating in war outside of Canada."

And after a debate on that proposed amendment the house divided and the amendment was negatived.

And the main motion being put to the house was agreed to on division.

Why on division? Because the hon. member for Beauharnois-Laprairie, despite his contention to the contrary, refused to rise with the hon. member for Quebec-Montmorency and your humble servant to demand a vote on that occasion. And the proof is found in an excerpt from the debates of September 11, 1939, which I shall read. The hon. member for Beauharnois-Laprairie did not protest then. He waited five years to do so.

[Mr. Lacombe.]

Mr. Chairman, I assert that, contrary to this newspaper's report—

That was the *Montreal Gazette*.

—my colleague the hon. member for Quebec-Montmorency (Mr. LaCroix) and myself rose in our places, thereby clearly indicating our desire to have the hon. members of the house record their vote. But, being alone with the hon. member for Quebec-Montmorency to have a recorded vote, Mr. Speaker declared the amendment defeated, inasmuch as according to the rules of the house a vote must be demanded by at least five members.

I make this statement, Mr. Chairman, in order to set out the actual facts.

It is again in order to set out the actual facts that I make this correction. When the hon. member for Beauharnois-Laprairie states that he opposed participation in the war, on September 19, 1939, with all due respect, I wonder whether he is in earnest. On that date, war had been declared. With the hon. member for Quebec-Montmorency, I was among the sixteen members who supported the amendment of the former member, Mr. MacNeil.

A few more words in conclusion. Not only did the hon. member for Beauharnois-Laprairie, who provoked this debate—and I must put an end to the legend which has been spreading in the province in the last four years—not only did the hon. member for Beauharnois-Laprairie not support the amendment which I presented September 9, 1939, against participation in the war, but he also refused to support the amendment I moved June 19, 1940, against conscription—for let us not forget that conscription, whether it is labelled mobilization or not, is in effect in Canada since 1940.

Mr. RAYMOND (Translation): I deny that statement.

Mr. LACOMBE (Translation): If the hon. member for Beauharnois-Laprairie says he denies this fact, I will once more open his eyes to the truth.

June 19, 1940, seconded by the hon. member for Quebec-Montmorency—

Mr. RAYMOND (Translation): We are discussing 1939.

Mr. LACOMBE (Translation): The hon. member for Beauharnois-Laprairie who always resents interruptions keeps on interrupting me, but I am not complaining because I always like a fight.

June 19, 1940, seconded by the hon. member for Quebec-Montmorency, I moved:

That all the words after "whereas" in the preamble of the bill be deleted and the following substituted therefor: "the government's war policy must be free and voluntary".

Protests were heard to the effect that there was an appeal from the Speaker's ruling. I could not demand the registering of the vote,