

possibly be effective or be any consolation whatever to a Canadian if that Canadian contemplates a great crisis such as that through which the world has already passed, and toward which unhappily it seems to be moving again.

I do suggest to the Administration that there is no such thing as the separate defence of Canada. It is a mirage. I am not arguing that there should not be some provision to help in that way as part of a major policy, but to lean upon that alone as providing for the security of this Dominion is arrant folly. It is leaning not on a reed, it is leaning on a vacuum—it is leaning on nothing. There cannot be any independent defence of this Dominion. We have to look around, then, and see by what association we may best provide for our defence. If other countries, including our great neighbours to the south, make up their minds—as they have done—that they must go to vast expenditures to make sure of the safety of their shores, we cannot very well sleep peacefully in our beds feeling that because we have a couple of destroyers here and a couple there, and a few air bases, Canada is secure. We know we must tie in somewhere; we must make up our minds in presence of great and mighty factors of the world situation, and make up our minds very soon. Some may be disposed to come to convictions on the basis of emotion and lineage tradition and derivation. Many fine citizens are governed by elements of that character, and I find no fault with them. Their feelings, indeed, I cannot help but share. But for my purpose this afternoon I cast them all aside, and I ask honourable members, and particularly members of the Government, to reflect on the position purely from the standpoint of Canada, even assuming we have no traditions, no overseas alliance, no Empire affiliations and no ties of lineage to constrain us.

I was rather surprised at the statement made by the mover of this motion in the very simple outline he gave of our defence problem. There are, he says, extremists both ways. There are people who say we should isolate ourselves—just lock the door and stay here; and there are others, he tells us, who say we should be Imperialist and be in all Britain's wars; and the right course, he ventures to advise, is to follow a middle road. Well, I presume the abstract statement cannot be criticized much, that we should follow a middle course; but what surprised me was the definition of a middle course which the honourable member gave. He said, "If there is a great war, if Britain is attacked by a

major power, it would never do for us to supply munitions to her enemy"; and he suggested the middle course was to refuse to supply those munitions—that if we cut off trade relations with him, that would be the proper and sensible middle course for Canada. Does such a course appeal to any honourable member? Cast from your minds all feelings for Britain. I find it hard to cast them from my own, but for the sake of my argument I am prepared to do so. Cast aside all affiliations, ties, traditions. Does anyone seriously think it is the part of wisdom for Canada to stand peacefully and complacently by and see the scales go down on Britain's side, see that great Empire struck from her place as a major power? Where would then be Canada's defence? May I ask the honourable member who comes from that great land, would he like then to be a member of Parliament compelled to provide for the defence of this Dominion? If there is one thing certain in this troubled world, honourable members, it is that the first line of defence for Canada—I go further—the first line of defence for the whole of this North American continent is the British Empire itself.

Some Hon. SENATORS: Hear, hear.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: I wonder if the people of this continent would feel the security they feel to-day if that line of defence were broken. Not if their action in 1914 is evidence. There are no particular affiliations of lineage or history between England and France, but Great Britain feels it is the part of prudence and of wisdom for her to guarantee the defence of France. I wonder if the considerations which so move Britain ought not perhaps to move us in maintaining the strength of Britain for the defence of this Dominion.

I have least patience of all with those who point to the American Republic and tell us that there is a Monroe Doctrine over there and we can shelter ourselves comfortably under its wings. To begin with, the Monroe Doctrine does not apply to this country. Canada is still a portion of the British Empire in the eyes of the American Republic. But assuming the Monroe Doctrine does apply, my first premise is this, that once the Monroe Doctrine is invoked Canada is in fact, if not in law, an adjunct, and a humiliated adjunct, of the American Republic from that moment on.

However, assuming such an eventuality would meet with a hospitable welcome at the hands of Canadians so far as sentiment is concerned, would it be a very happy one?