

and the St. Lawrence. From a strategical standpoint it is of very great importance. I know not of its value from the standpoint of its possibility of production of pulpwood, but I knew something of the circumstances under which it was acquired, and of the surveys which were made at that time. It is very difficult to understand just why soundings, for instance, are so essential now for the purpose of ascertaining the value of an island for timber purposes.

Mr. DUNNING: There is a very important reason there, in that case.

Mr. BENNETT: But I am talking about recent times. I agree that a very substantial investigation did take place, and rightly or wrongly we were induced, in view of representations made as to the situation of the paper industry, to provide money for the construction of wharves at Anticosti island, to which the Minister of National Health referred this afternoon. But more recent explorations in that direction are perhaps a little more difficult to understand.

One word more, and that has to do with our situation with relation to our friends to the south. The importance of the island from the standpoint of an airport or the standpoint of a possible base for many operations must be apparent, and affects as well our relations with the outside world as our relations with our friends and neighbours to the south. It would be an unpleasant situation if it were to develop that we had not protected ourselves to the fullest possible degree. I was glad to hear the Prime Minister say—what I would expect he would say, of course—that he is fully aware of the possibilities latent in the situation.

I am sure anyone charged with the responsibilities of government would realize these possibilities. The steps which might be taken for the purpose of protecting ourselves is another matter altogether. I think the provisions of the statute might easily be utilized so as to protect us, and at the same time not involve any heavy liabilities.

I have not forgotten the tendencies of our friends from Germany. Those who have read the memoranda left by the last German ambassador to Great Britain before the war, Prince Lichnowsky, will realize to what extent he, himself, was the victim of deception in connection with the operations of his own country. I think it is only fair to say that one country house, which was frequently visited at weekends by German representatives, was found to be a vantage point for observations from the roof. The type of men who

came here to make investigations which were not made in a corner—in that sense they were done openly—certainly were not Hollanders nor were they Dutch. They were not men who were concerned solely with the manufacture of pulp, as I mentioned this afternoon.

We should not hesitate to take steps which would render it impossible for us to have any further anxiety with respect to the matter. The statute I think provides a remedy, without involving us in any great liability. It is always difficult to know how far one should go in discussing a matter of this kind. There is a public duty with respect to the community at large on the part of those who constitute an opposition, and there is a public duty as well not to arouse unnecessarily public anxiety or even public resentment. But on the other hand I had occasion the other day to refer to what had come to my own observation, and not in this part of Canada, I am perfectly frank in saying. Since then I doubt not that many members of this committee have read in one of the great United States newspapers of the anxiety that is felt there with respect to somewhat similar matters. The far-reaching consequences of the doctrine that has been enunciated by the German Fuehrer in connection with minorities, and the duty to the parent state of all who owe, or whose ancestors owed allegiance to that community, are such as to make one apprehensive under the conditions to which attention has been directed here.

If I have refrained from making statements that I think possibly at the moment might not assist the government in the discharge of its public duty, I do so because, the Prime Minister having stated that the government is fully aware of the circumstances to which attention has been directed, and that it is taking every reasonable step to deal with that situation, I should do nothing which will embarrass the government in that work, except to point out certain difficulties which I think are inherent in the situation itself, and particularly that difficulty which arises out of the organization of a Canadian company with dummy directors, alleging that there is no danger or fear because the Canadian directors or those in charge may have pieces of paper issued to them which they have endorsed in blank and which mean nothing in the world. The whole situation so bristles with difficulties that it does seem to me an easy way out would be to take the appropriate proceedings and expropriate that island; not the property as a whole, but the soil without the forest or the mills or the wharves;