

D 22322

immediate steps necessary to have our own defences in order. We were also able to have Parliament assembled in a week's time, and the legislative program in readiness for immediate presentation to Parliament.

*Careful planning of Canada's war effort*

Upon the foundations prepared by the Government, and so speedily laid by Parliament, we are now developing Canada's war effort. Our actions have been controlled by the belief that, if we are to avoid errors of hasty and confused action, such as led to needless sacrifice of blood and treasure in the last war, the foundations must be well and truly laid. In what promises to be a long and exhausting struggle, our contribution will be all the more effective for careful planning. Modern war is a grim business. It demands cool judgment, and a balanced strategy.

I stated in Parliament last March that, in the event of Canada taking part in a war, "participation could not be passive or formal, nor would it be unplanned or irresponsible". I added that it was clear that the conditions determining the nature of participation in such a conflict had undergone a great change since the last war. I should like now to say something about those changed conditions; about the nature of the present conflict, and the policies essential to a successful prosecution of the struggle.

Those of you who have read the War Memoirs of Mr. Lloyd George, will have been impressed by the frequency of his references, throughout the four volumes, to the most fatal of all the errors of the last war. This was the tendency to imitate, or, worse still, to follow mechanically, what had been done in previous wars. Mr. Lloyd George mentions again and again the failure to realize that times change, and, with them, the weapons and technique of war itself. His Memoirs are largely the story of his struggle against the tendency to do things in the same old way, and to repeat the old errors and the old mistakes.

The war of 1914-1918 is still vividly remembered by all who lived through those years. That memory inevitably provokes comparisons. Such comparisons, for several reasons, are apt to be misleading. Many new weapons have been developed as a result of

D 22323

discoveries and inventions made in the last war. Some of these developments were unforeseen even at its conclusion. When we recall that, at the beginning of the last war, neither submarines nor aircraft played any appreciable part, we are better able to realize that we are faced with a new kind of war. In 1914, governments were still mainly concerned about the number of men they could place in the field. What happened in 1914 should not be blindly repeated in 1939. New weapons demand a new technique of warfare.

Many of us still recall the feeling, widespread in 1914, that the war would be over within eight or nine weeks. We were incredulous when Kitchener prophesied that it would last at least four years. To-day, we have no such easy optimism. The most competent military authorities believe this is not likely to be a short war. They advise that we prepare for a war of at least three years' duration. Of course, no one can really foretell whether it will last that long, or whether it may go on even longer. All we know certainly is that we must prepare for a long and terrible struggle in which staying power, the power to hold out to the end, may well be decisive.

*Problems of defence and co-operation created by the present war*

For Canada, the present war presents problems which did not exist in 1914. We have, today, far greater responsibilities for the defence of our own territory and, especially, our coasts. In the war of 1914-1918, the defence of Canada was a secondary matter compared with our contribution to the allies overseas. Apart from guarding the approaches to the St. Lawrence and the Atlantic coast, little was required in the way of Canadian defence. The two great powers on the far side of the Pacific, Russia and Japan, were allies of Great Britain. Japan assumed the task of naval patrol in the Pacific—the task, in fact, of defending our British Columbian coast. To-day, at all times, we must be prepared, in so far as we can, to defend our western coast for ourselves. Furthermore, in the present war, submarine warfare has been faced from the outset. The