

he said is true. In addition to Montreal and Three Rivers, let us for a moment consider the vulnerability to aeroplane attack of our two Atlantic winter ports, to say nothing of the winter ports on the Pacific. I have lived in both Halifax and Saint John and know that most of the docks at those points are of timber. In almost no time a flotilla of aeroplanes could drop incendiary bombs and others and set the whole of the docks on fire and destroy them. Then where would our trade be? How should we get any grain out of this country? We should be tied up—finished.

In this great nation of ours we must look to the protection of our trade routes, our coasts and harbours. The British Navy is the first line of defence of the Empire. The Admiralty must keep as many ships as possible concentrated as a striking force for action, if needed, against any one or two or three enemy powers. If we demand that a certain number of ships be sent over to patrol our coasts and protect our harbours, and if other parts of the Empire demand the same sort of thing, the British Navy will be split up into various sections instead of remaining concentrated for the protection of the Mother Country and of the trade routes on the seven seas.

We have often heard the suggestion that another country might be kind enough and good enough to look after our interests with her naval forces. But how would the pride of the people of Canada be affected if they saw foreign vessels patrolling our coasts and protecting our harbours? And if any of those vessels were to meet with disaster, and some members of their crews were to be wounded or killed, what would our feelings be?

We are told that Canada is about the wealthiest country in the world. Look at our grain production, our great expanse of forests, our mines, our pulp and paper manufactories and our general industry. Most lines of business are in full production and flourishing. Yet with all our wealth we continue to sponge on the Mother Country. That is not an honourable thing for the people of this country to do. In the past one of the greatest statesmen of this country declared that Canada ought to have a navy of its own for the protection of its coast-line and ports. He made an effort to organize a navy, but he was turned down. I ask the people of this country: Where is our pride? Are we to sponge any longer on the Mother Country and go with our hats in our hands, saying "Please help us and protect us against the enemy in case of war"? Are we to continue that attitude when we are so wealthy and the people of the Mother Country are bearing a

heavy burden of taxes—a burden that has been assumed in part for our protection? I say the present condition is a disgrace. How long is it going to continue? All I can say is, I hope to God it will not continue much longer.

Hon. A. D. McRAE: Honourable senators—

Hon. Mr. LACASSE: The third General.

Hon. Mr. McRAE:—in rising to speak to the broad question before the House may I crave your indulgence for a few moments while I clear up a reference which was made to me by some honourable senators earlier in the session? That reference was based on a report which credited me as saying that I would raise my own private army to keep Canada out of a war. That would certainly be a ridiculous proposal in more ways than one. If there is anything worse for a country than a foreign war it is a civil war, such as is now going on in Spain. I ask honourable senators to accept my word that I never made that statement or anything resembling it.

On my return to Toronto on the 2nd of December, 1935, not a few of my friends and others were so disturbed about that report that I found it necessary to depart from my custom of never contradicting anything appearing in the newspapers and I issued a full denial through the kindness of the Canadian Press. It is not my desire, honourable senators, to take up your time by reading this denial.

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE: Read it.

Hon. Mr. McRAE: The copy I have on my desk is from page 5 of the Toronto Mail and Empire of December 3, 1935, where any honourable member who is sufficiently interested can find it. That the report should be referred to again this session only goes to prove the truth of the old saying that "Denial can never overtake rumour."

I approach the question before the House with considerable diffidence to-night, honourable senators, following, as I do, two outstanding generals of the late War, gentlemen whom I am proud to call my personal friends. I agree with a great deal which they said. That I do not concur in their line of argument is perhaps due to the fact that I am disposed to look at this matter in a more calculating way—colder, if you will—having in view the ultimate result of our participation in war.

It is now three years since I precipitated in this Chamber a lengthy discussion on the League of Nations. At that time I was alarmed by the covenants which we, in common with other nations, had undertaken and which I was sure would, if lived up to, involve us in a foreign war. I know that many