

he who knows? Eagerly and hungrily searching, I will listen to anyone's idea and give it my utmost respect. I am ready to go far in sacrifice or compromise once I have confidence that the sacrifice will permanently solve the problem. Meanwhile, living in a world of stark realities, I know that men must carry on and I conceive it to be my duty to give my support to those who are trying to carry on to the best of their ability and with apparently the best wisdom that man has attained.

Mr. Speaker, I dread war as much as any pacifist in the land—I dread and abhor it. There are four sons in my household, any one of whom means many times more to me than my own life and health. Three of them would be in immediate danger in the next war. As dear to me as my sons are several brothers whose names would almost surely be numbered for service. I have daughters and sisters who might be bereaved. In my life as a teacher I have learned to love with a peculiar tenderness the great numbers of boys and girls whose lives have been entrusted to my care. No one can value more the youth of this land. When I see a young man on the street and there flashes into my mind, as there does so often, a vision of his splendid body shattered by the hand of war, sickness comes over me so nauseating as to make me almost faint. When I see the beautiful face of any of our girls and the vision flashes into my mind of that face distorted with woe, I am moved almost beyond control. At the same time I realize that in the next war civilization is likely to be wiped out entirely. But what can be done about it? If we leave our country utterly undefended while the nations all around are arming, how can we hope that our weakness will prevent our destruction? When has the helplessness of the lamb rendered it immune from the wolf, or the defencelessness of the innocent child saved it from the kidnapping marauder.

As vividly as any man I sense the many excuses which we might offer for not now preparing. Many a youth, for example, is brooding in his heart and saying such bitter words as: "You fellows making the laws do not have to do the fighting; if you did, you would not be quite so ready to talk about armaments." To them I can only reply: "Perhaps so, but our elders decided the last war for us." Had we known all that they knew, I think we would have agreed with them. We members now bear the responsibility. We are trying to do for those whom we represent, perhaps not altogether what they now would ask us to do, but what we

[Mr. Blackmore.]

believe they would want us to do if they knew what we know and sensed what we sense. We are trying to do what they might wish we had done when they know, ten years from now, more than they now know. Again there are heard throughout the land voices muttering, not loud but deep: "Make Canada fit to live in; make it worth defending and we will gladly defend it. Give a square deal to the men who did your dirty work in the last war." With such voices I feelingly sympathize. I know men have mismanaged this house of ours, this Canada, and we cannot yet agree how to manage it; but shall we because of that, and while we are arguing how to manage it, let our enemies snatch it away from us or bomb our children within it?

Others are saying that the United States will defend us. Probably so, but could we lift up our heads and call ourselves an independent nation if another nation had to defend us? If upon the United States depended the responsibility for defending us, how long would it be before the United States would demand a potent voice in the management of our external affairs? Many ardent souls have struggled through many decades to make Canada independent and to assert Canada's nationhood. What for? That Canada might become a dependant of the United States?

Still other people are saying: "Britain will defend us." But suppose the strain should be too great and Britain should fall. Would Canadians then feel as safe as they feel now when Britain stands? Suppose that she should fall and we knew that that fall had come because she had risked her safety to defend us. Could Canadians ever again be reconciled? If we failed to do our share in preparing to defend our own coasts, and if, because of that, the democracies of the world should fail, could we ever hold up our heads? At other times I hear voices say: What can Canada possibly do to defend herself in modern warfare—there is no safety in war? Such truth as lies in their contention I gladly grant. At the same time I must remember the story of the little drops of water that can make a mighty ocean. Besides, did anyone say during the great war that Canada could do so little? Did anyone think such a thing just after the great war? (I cannot help feeling that if we in Canada do anything less than all we can in reason do, then in case of a disaster we must stand blameworthy both to ourselves and to all generations. We shall have betrayed our trust.)