

pling with the real problem which is bringing anguish and terror to the world surrounding us and which now faces Canada. It is quite certain that the condition of Europe is a subject of anxiety in the minds of a vast majority of people in this Dominion. I ask honourable members how many men of thought and earnestness they have talked with on any subject within the last year who have not at some point of the discussion inquired what you thought about the plight of Europe, about what was going to happen and how it would affect this country. Never in my life, in a state of peace, have I seen the people of Canada so universally concerned about the condition of the world, from the standpoint of their own interests, as they are just now. It therefore becomes us at least to meditate together as to whether we are acting wisely and as mature and intelligent people in the situation which now confronts us.

I have read an address delivered at the last meeting of the League of Nations by the Prime Minister of our country. I wish I could compliment him, as I have done on a late speech, on the adequacy of the message which he there expressed. There are few passages in it to which I can attach any meaning at all; if meaning was intended, I do not know what it was. I should assume that the purpose of a meeting of the League was to endeavour to arrive at conclusions for joint action of some kind, through the expression of views by various representatives of the far-scattered countries who send their delegates there. If it had not that purpose, if it cannot get somewhere along that line, I do not see how its existence can be justified. If the League is only to be told by spokesmen for this Dominion that whatever happens Canada's Parliament will decide what Canada is to do, then I affirm that the League is told exactly and absolutely nothing. Everyone knows that the Parliament which may be in existence when the time comes to make a decision will do so. All the delegates to the League know that, without being vouchsafed a message by our Prime Minister. What I think the League would like to know from us—and we should like to have similar information coming from fellow members of the League—is, what does Canada feel it ought to do in order to be in such a position that, if Parliament does make a decision, such decision will really matter to the world. If when the hour strikes Parliament has nothing with which to give effect to Canada's policy, then certainly it will not matter a whit what the decision of Parliament may be at that time. If at the close of our Prime Minister's address some delegate had dared to ask him just what he came over to the

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN.

League meeting for, I wonder what his answer would have been.

Yes, the world is in a state of anxiety, and the subject has to be reviewed in a serious, earnest and anxious way. I believe that some attention to defence, in certain specific features at least, is being given by the Administration. Not long ago I saw an announcement that the Minister of National Defence would review the whole subject in a radio broadcast and take the people of Canada into his confidence as to the general views entertained by the Government at this time. That broadcast was to have taken place, I think, a week ago, but it was never heard. Why it was not heard I do not know. But the announcement indicated at least that the subject of defence had entered the minds of certain members of the Administration and that they thought we could not rest just as we are. It indicates that in those quarters of the Government the changed attitude of England, and especially the changed attitude of pacifist parties of England, brought about by the experiences of this post-war era, has had some significance.

I observe also that in one arm of our service, the naval arm, two destroyers which were purchased in 1928 have been replaced by destroyers constructed in 1931, or ready for delivery in 1931, and that two more have been built within Canada. This seems to be the extent of contemplated preparation in the naval arm.

I observe also that a reorganization of the militia, put under way by the late Administration two years ago at least, has been proceeded with, and that probably a better organization of that arm of the service now obtains than before. It may be reduced, in personnel, but it is better equipped. But when one remembers that the total personnel was only 3,000, that the militia under training two weeks a year aggregated only 35,000, and that all they could obtain in that light training was merely some appreciation of the meaning of discipline, one realizes that the militia arm must mean very little in the presence of a peril that may any time be imminent.

There is, though, the air service, and I see that the Department of National Defence has done something in the way of establishing an air base on the Pacific coast—or at least has announced its intention to do so. I do not know what is the program it may have in mind, but I close this review of our actual Canadian defence position at the present time with these words, that all this which the Government has in mind cannot