

Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) several times within the last two years to consider the establishment of food reservoirs in Great Britain where our grain and other foodstuffs could have been stored, but nothing has been done. So far as munitions are concerned, it will take over a year before anything very much can be done; it takes that long and more to get trained men for defence, and untrained men are only a wastage, so we should co-ordinate and cooperate with Britain.

There will be a further discussion on this subject, I believe, so I need not take very much more of the time of the house. I am surprised, however, that no steps have been taken by the government in the way of a general survey of all skilled labour and man power in order to throw light on the adequacy or inadequacy of Canada's resources and to plan in advance the proper allocation of our man power between the ages of eighteen and sixty-five. A national register of this kind could be controlled by a national board through forms prepared by the board and mailed free to the census bureau or the bureau of statistics, and should include the number of men available for the necessary production of equipment and munitions. It should also provide for a proper allocation of classified personnel for defence and community purposes in general, and should seek the cooperation of industry, the trade unions, the provinces and the municipalities.

I believe that if the people of this country are awakened to the gravity and danger they will rise to the task. To my hon. friends from Quebec I say that after all is said and done there is no such thing as the defence of Canada. Our first line of defence is Great Britain and France, and if they fail it is good-bye to Canada and its defences and good-bye to all the defences we think we have in Canada, and it will be all over. We have only a small army, air force and navy. Upon whom would the people of the gulf of St Lawrence depend for defence if it were not for the British navy? Not on our small fleet. Remember the submarine menace of the last war; of every four ships that went out one did not come back. I recall well this menace many times here. The situation is more acute now. So I say Canada's first line of defence is Great Britain and France. If they fail, the whole world will go into outer darkness, and that goes for Canada too. If Britain fails, it will be all over.

In conclusion I wish to challenge the motion changing our policy, creating the precedent that in time of war a resolution of this house is necessary. Parliament might better have

taken steps to prepare Canada by security and defences during the last two years, but in my opinion nothing much was done.

Mr. WILFRID LACROIX (Quebec-Montmorency) (Translation): Mr. Speaker, I have carefully listened to the following statement made yesterday by the right hon. the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King):

The information we have obtained indicates that the most immediate and effective further means of cooperation would be a rapid expansion of air training, and of air and naval facilities, and the despatch of trained air personnel. These measures we propose to institute immediately.

If my understanding is correct, Mr. Speaker, this means that the government intends to participate by first sending air forces overseas and later, in conformity with the declaration made this afternoon by the right hon. the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe)—probably much later—to send a voluntary expeditionary force.

Last year, I made a statement before the house which was contained in an editorial of the only liberal newspaper in Quebec city, *le Soleil*. *Le Soleil*, which is a fairly well known publicity medium in the province of Quebec, is taken, I believe, to at least reflect the views and thought of the liberals in the province. And what did that editorial state? I make the statement my own, not changing a line, a sentence, even a comma. The article, which appeared on March 31, 1939, was headed: "No conscription, but..." This is what it said:

Undoubtedly, should Britain call her sons to her aid, we shall see a legion of young Canadians rushing to answer the call of the mother country. In smaller numbers, Canadians of French or foreign descent shall follow their example, with sentiments toward Great Britain the strength of which shall be all the greater for the respect shown by British policy for the right of their respective native lands to freely determine their own destiny. To leave these voluntary recruits be absorbed into the imperial forces would be to follow the dictates of wisdom. Otherwise, should our national government raise Canadian contingents on its own, they would then assume a triple heavy responsibility: in the first place, that of acting in such a manner as to invite violent reprisals against Canada; in the second place, that of involving the credit of the country in a disastrous venture; and in the third place, that of accepting the consequences, logical or sentimental, which attach to such participation in a foreign war.

If we stop to analyse these three reasons, and if we look into them in the light of the policy which was set forth in the house this afternoon, we have a right to consider, as Canadians, what shall be the consequences attending upon the action we take when deciding to participate in a foreign war, arising from any cause whatsoever.