

present moment is whether Canada will obtain a war indemnity, either from Germany, directly or indirectly out of the indemnity paid to England by Germany, or possibly directly from England. The people are anxious to know what the Government have done in this respect. I am glad to see the acting Prime Minister (Sir Thomas White) in his place; I hope he will reassure the people with regard to this important matter.

The first question we ask ourselves is: Are we entitled to this indemnity? To this we get an answer by turning to the beginning of the war with a view to impressing upon our minds who were the assailants; whether we were the offensive party, or the defensive; whether we were forced into the war against our will. It has been said and repeated often by the Prime Minister and other members of the Cabinet that the first line of defence of Canada in the war was that of the trenches in Flanders and France and that we had to take part in the conflict to defend our liberty, our freedom and our property. For my part, I have many times advocated that Canada should participate in the war to an extent consistent with her condition and her means. I thought that if perchance the Allies had been vanquished and the Germans had been victorious, our freedom and our liberty would have been jeopardized and we would have been penalized by the German people. I considered, therefore, that rather than wait and have before us the possibility of the victory of the Germans, with all the necessary consequences to ourselves, it was preferable that we should defend ourselves now, that we should protect our freedom, our rights and our liberties. It is in all the codes, civil and criminal, that a citizen has the right to take the necessary steps, even if forcible ones, to defend and protect his property. Since the beginning of the world it has been a part of the law, either unwritten or statutory, of all countries that a nation has a right to defend itself and to take whatever steps may be necessary to uphold its liberties and its freedom. If, therefore, we were forced to participate in the war, we have the right, and it is our duty, to claim from Germany indemnification of our material loss. There is another way of considering this question. It has been said that when England is at war we are at war. I believe in that constitutional principle; our status as a colony puts us in such a position that when England is at war, we are at war;—when the whole is at war the part is at war.

[Mr. DuTremblay.]

We may look at the matter of a war indemnity for Canada from two points of view. If we were obliged to enter the war in order to defend ourselves, then Germany should pay us an indemnity. On the other hand, if we took part in the war to help England, England should indemnify us. To me, it is a question of simple justice and equity.

I have said that we should obtain such an indemnity directly or indirectly from what England may obtain. We all know that France will obtain certain advantages following the conclusion of peace. There is no doubt that she will receive Alsace and Lorraine, the two provinces towards which she has looked for fifty years. There is no doubt that the Treaty of Commerce of 1870 under which Germany was treated as the best customer of France, will be denounced. England will certainly receive great advantages. The German navy will disappear. It has cost England a lot of money to build up and maintain a navy of sufficient strength to meet the peril of the German naval policy and the general enterprise of Germany in that direction. This peril now disappears for England. England will receive many advantages in trade and commerce; possibly she will annex some territory.

The same thing might be said of other countries, such as Italy and Australia, that took part in this war on the side of the Allies; but this country neither needs nor asks any annexation or gain of territory. What we desire is to be indemnified for the money which we have spent and the material losses which Canada has suffered in connection with this war. It would mean a great deal for this country to receive an indemnity. To-day we owe about \$2,000,000,000, and we nearly went into bankruptcy on account of this war. We have spent on the war about \$1,500,000,000, which is a tremendous debt for a population of eight or nine million people. According to a statement made by a member of the Cabinet, we shall be called upon to pay out about \$300,000,000 a year to cover interest payments, pensions for our soldiers, and other charges. Since the outbreak of the war we have been taxed in all directions. A heavy burden is to-day upon our people, upon their incomes, upon their profits. A stamp tax has been imposed upon cheques, notes, etc. The tariff has been very largely increased. All this is due to the war. This terrible-burden upon the country will remain not only for this generation, but for generations to come. It is, therefore, the duty of the Govern-