

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: But the approach in May was met with a direct, naked negative.

Hon. Mr. HARMER: There was no formal approach.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: The British Secretary of State for Air said they were sending someone over right away to explore the situation. And someone did come.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: That was later on.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I would draw the attention of this Chamber to the fact that this was a peace-time proposal. This was in 1938. Great Britain was not suffering from any jitters; she was simply looking ahead and saying that there were fine young men in Canada who could be called to the colours as airmen. And I quite believe that the big scheme that is now under way will train Canadians, and that we shall see hardly one British air recruit coming here, because they have their own system in England. But they have succeeded in their suggestion for co-operation, because in Canada we have perhaps the greatest centre in the world for air development and recruiting. We have now a vast expansion of the scheme which in the spring of 1938 was already under way as the result of joint explorations by the Governments of Canada and the United Kingdom. This fact disposes of unjustifiable strictures on our supposed dilatoriness prior to the declaration of war.

I would point out to my right honourable friend this further fact, that in the session of 1939 all that could be done in peace-time by the two Governments, British and Canadian, by collaborating and exploring the situation, was done. The Canadian Government did not lose any time in making preparations for the smaller scheme, which has since developed into the large undertaking of to-day. At that session Parliament appropriated the sum of \$6,000,000 for the joint training of pilots. As I have already pointed out, the British Secretary of State for Air said, as early as July 7, 1938, that his Government were warmly appreciative of the offer made by Canada and were sending a representative over here to explore, in co-operation with our Government, the possibility of working out a scheme for training facilities in Canada. That representative came, a scheme was agreed upon, and at the very next session, in 1939, the sum of \$6,000,000 was voted for it.

It has been said in the press that at this session we should render an account of our stewardship, that we should state what we have done so far and what our programme is

for the future. My right honourable friend opposite (Right Hon. Mr. Meighen) has impugned our whole organization; he thinks we have done nothing, and is not sure that we shall do anything. Well, I believe that if he will bear with me I shall show him that no group of men, even those super-brained men who were supposed to enter the shadow government of Dr. Manion, could have done better.

Before war was declared we had called out the militia to man our coastal defences and to protect vulnerable points. When Parliament authorized declaration of war we organized our active co-operation by the side of Great Britain. And I draw the attention of my right honourable friend to the fact that if one group in Canada was responsible for framing our policy and for drawing a united Canada to the support of Great Britain, it was the King-Lapointe combination.

Hon. Mr. FARRIS: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Our undertakings differed from those assumed in 1914, when our efforts were primarily directed towards providing man-power for our expeditionary forces and producing munitions and supplies. We then had no naval service, so to speak, and no Canadian air force.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: In what year?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: That was in 1914. Our present commitments embrace three distinct services and cover operations on land, at sea and in the air. The improvement in weapons in modern warfare has compelled Canada to assume larger obligations for the defence of our coasts, our ports, our shipping, and our inland lines of communication. At the present time our coastal defences are fully manned by more than 10,000 men. Since the outbreak of the war more than 80,000 men have been enlisted in the Canadian Active Service Force.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: How are these 10,000 men defending our coasts now?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I can tell my right honourable friend the places where they are located. I do not know that it would be advisable to inform Parliament and the enemy as to where our men are stationed.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: I do not ask that. Will the honourable leader tell us what they have to defend the coasts with? I do not want him to give information that he does not desire to give.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: My right honourable friend will be surprised to find what was spent on armaments at Vancouver.