

*North Atlantic Treaty*

ing an attack on France at that time. The Triple Entente stood firm and the crisis passed.

Then in the summer months of 1914—as so many of the hon. members will recall—event followed event in quick succession, after the assassin's bullet at Sarajevo had set flame to the explosive accumulation of military power. Again there was no recourse to arbitration and Germany disregarded every undertaking which had been given at The Hague. The Hague agreements were contemptuously described as a “scrap of paper”. As the most terrible war of all history up to that time spent its course, the thing which became increasingly apparent was that it could have been avoided if German military leaders had believed in advance that they would be faced by the combined military strength which ultimately crushed them on the field of battle. As has already been pointed out by the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent), it was the uncertainty of those who finally joined ranks to win a decisive victory for freedom which undoubtedly encouraged military aggression at that time.

When the nations met at Versailles in 1919 and drafted the covenant of the league of nations, the thought uppermost in the minds of those who gave it form was that such uncertainty in the future should be avoided and that there would be positive collective action to preserve peace, with the assurance of judicial settlement of all international disputes by what they described as the “permanent international court of justice”. That pact, which unfortunately was never ratified by the government of the United States, although it had been signed by President Wilson, was by far the most ambitious attempt to ensure peace and freedom by international agreement which had ever been made in the long history of mankind.

The tragic story followed very much the same pattern, however, and the failure to observe the strict provisions of the covenant and, what was even more important, the failure to carry forward the spirit behind the covenant as evidenced by the exchange of memoranda and expressions of opinion at Versailles, led to the breakdown of that pact as had occurred so many times before.

The first of those was the Locarno pact, signed by France, Germany and Belgium, under which they undertook “that they will in no case attack or invade each other or resort to war against each other.” Those words were still the words of what was supposed to be a valid pact when war came in 1939. They further undertook to refer any difficulties which might arise between them to the International Court of Justice.

[Mr. Drew.]

Another pact was signed in 1928. Most hon. members will recall the statements which were made at that time, and the hopes which were expressed. Because of the increasing recognition of the fact that the covenant of the league of nations did not in fact assure collective action to preserve peace, the representatives of fifty-nine nations met in Paris in 1928 and solemnly signed a pact renouncing war as an instrument of international policy.

As we recall today the reassuring statements made by statesmen throughout the world, following the completion of those pacts, and particularly the Paris peace pact of 1928, we realize only too well how little pacts mean in themselves and how all-important is the action taken under those pacts when the threat they were designed to meet actually presents itself as a reality.

When the world was engulfed in a greater and still more devastating war in 1939, the pattern bore a dreadful similarity to that which had preceded the outbreak of war in 1914. Once again it became clear that if the aggressors had believed that the free nations would stand together to defend their freedom, it was unlikely that they would have invited their own destruction as they did. Once again the pacts meant nothing. No serious attention was paid to them. The mounting power of the aggressors was apparent to anyone but there was reluctance to take the steps which would have restrained that aggression without recourse to war.

Those of us whose memories embrace the tragic repetition of events which preceded the two world wars have compelling reasons to revive those memories as a guide to future action in seeking to prevent a recurrence of those disasters on an even greater scale in the future.

In spite of the clarity of vision of by far the greatest and most far-seeing statesman of our time, the people of his own and other free countries failed in the years before the war to heed the repeated warnings of Winston Churchill that the world was moving step by step down the hopeless path of appeasement to another and more terrible war. Others whose voices did not command the same large audience, but who had seen what was taking place, did their utmost to remind those who heard them of the dreadful similarity between what was then taking place and what had occurred in the months and years before August, 1914. It is important to recall those warnings and the way in which they were disregarded, because once again we have seen the bright hopes of worldwide collective action contained in the words of the United Nations charter dashed to the