

we fought. We have an interest in it as well as the great powers—if we have not, we should have stayed home.

Canada, moreover, has one qualification which is almost unique, to fit her for this task. We are one of the very few powers concerned in world war II who have no direct, immediate interest in any question of detail.

We don't care whether a boundary runs on this side or the other of a certain town or hill or river; we covet no colonies; we have next to no interest in reparations.

But we do have an overwhelming interest in the permanence of peace.

That is why we demand an effective share in the making of the postwar world. The Canadian government did well to make its position clear from the start.

With all but the last sentence perhaps there will be considerable agreement. But did the Canadian government make its position clear from the start? The Paris peace conference sat from July 29 to October 15 of last year. Canada was represented there for seventy-nine days. Twenty-one nations discussed the terms of peace for five defeated enemy countries. I am led to believe they were called in after the big four had discussed everything for an unusually long period of time. I am also led to believe that they could not touch the parts of the treaties which had received the unanimous approval of the big four. They could make only recommendations which the big four would guarantee or promise to consider privately afterwards.

In the British House of Commons last October, Right Hon. Winston Churchill, with all his experience and command of language, speaking on the question of procedure at the Paris peace conference, said:

The Paris peace conference is bad diplomacy, but it may be a valuable education.

At the end of the Paris sessions an unofficial poll of newspapermen from twenty-seven countries indicated that thirty-one regarded the conference as a success, fifty-six called it a failure and thirty-three called it a farce. I am not prepared to go that far, but it does show that there was dissatisfaction with the manner in which the procedure of the Paris peace conference was carried out, particularly so far as the smaller and the middle powers were concerned. Canada was there and in my opinion should have taken the attitude of "once bitten twice shy". I should like to have seen the statement with respect to participation, which was placed before the special deputies in January of this year, laid before the nations of the world and the big four while the Paris peace conference was in session; because January was too late for this country to put its arguments before them and have them properly considered. It was then and there that the government should have nipped

this plan in the bud. That would have been better than waiting for a similar situation to grow up in Paris, or waiting until similar plans for the Austrian and German settlement had been almost fully developed. In my opinion we missed the boat in Paris. January was too late. The plans of the great powers had taken shape before we grasped the opportunity of putting our case before them, and this has made our task immeasurably greater, though not I hope insurmountable.

Another factor which has weakened our position as far as full participation in the peace settlement is concerned, was the withdrawal a year ago of all our occupation forces in the German reich. It is now plain, I think, that this government ought to tell parliament and the people, for the first time, why at that particular time we ceased to play our part in policing naziland. True, our forces wanted to get home. I was over there and I know that they wanted to get back. But there were just as many in Canada who at that very time were prepared to take on the job of relieving and replacing those who felt that the work had become monotonous for them and that they ought to be home.

Was it because we could not have a greater say in administration and policies in Germany that we withdrew our troops at that time, or what was the reason? I would ask the government to give an answer, before the debate ends, to that simple but direct and pertinent question. Considerable weight must, I think, be attached, from the standpoint of the withdrawal of our occupying army, to the clear outspoken remarks of Right Hon. Vincent Massey, former High Commissioner for Canada in London, who, speaking only last Wednesday at Ste. Anne de Bellevue, Quebec, made the following statement as reported in the columns of the next day's *Montreal Star*:

"Our moral position is strong," Mr. Massey declared, adding: "It would, I think, be stronger if like other smaller countries we had continued to play even a modest part in the forces which at present police the German reich. Our withdrawal at so early a date did nothing to enhance our prestige or to give evidence of our readiness to assume responsibilities in peace as we had so willingly done in war."

These words cannot be dismissed lightly, for they fell from the lips of a senior Canadian diplomat who by virtue of his position was closer to the scene of that withdrawal than any other representative Canada had at that time.

I express my personal view only in this regard, but it has always seemed to me that the commonwealth members, and particularly Canada, missed a grand opportunity to lift