

(E) WAR DEVELOPMENTS

1. STATEMENT OF THE PRIME MINISTER ON RECENT WAR DEVELOPMENTS, DECEMBER 2, 1940.

Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have been asked, before parliament adjourns, to speak again on the war in Europe, on the present position of Britain and on Canada's co-operation in meeting the situation with which Britain is faced.

As we ponder the magnitude of the struggle and of Canada's contribution, it is more than ever necessary to view isolated events in their relation to the whole, to correlate all the factors of time and place, and to maintain throughout a due sense of proportion and a true perspective. Sunshine and shadow are bound to alternate on the wide horizons of a world war. It is inevitable that there will be periods of success and periods of reverse. We would be foolish if we became unduly elated by an immediate triumph; we would be even more foolish if we became depressed by a momentary loss.

Recently many statements have been made in the press, in parliament, and over the air, by members of the government of the United Kingdom and other leading Britons. Some may seem pessimistic, others may sound optimistic. The truth is, of course, that there are many matters which give us grave concern. There are also many things to cheer us. If statements sometimes sound pessimistic, they reflect the willingness of British leaders to speak the truth, and the capacity of the British people to stand the truth. If to some they appear occasionally almost too optimistic, they reflect the courage, the hope and the determination of the British people and their refusal now, or at any time, to consider the prospect of defeat.

It has been the duty of my colleagues and myself, as it would be the duty of any government, to try to see the war steadily, and to see it whole. We have sought never to lose the ultimate in the prospect of the immediate; always to remember that what may appear best to serve the apparent interests of the present may be of ill service to the future. From the very beginning the policy of the present administration has been to plan, in co-operation with the government of the United Kingdom, for a final victorious outcome of the struggle.

Let me give an illustration, the force of which will be immediately recognized. Had we been guided by vociferous demands that were made at the outset, we would have concentrated our effort, our wealth and our