

All thinking Canadians understand that our title, or rather our status, as an autonomous nation in the British commonwealth implies not only rights, but duties as well. Our Canadians are too manly, too proud, to misunderstand their duties to themselves and to others.

There is no question here of imperialism nor of excessive nationalism. Let us keep away from the eccentric and extremist groups, one of which would say, "Not one cent, not one man!" while the other demands, "To the last cent, to the last man!" The real Canadian attitude is between those two extremes; we must keep to a happy medium.

To my mind, the true desire of Canadians, enlightened by a clear perception of their moral and material interests, is to support the cause of England and the democratic nations which refuse to become the prey and slaves of a grasping dictator.

The hour is grave, this humane and Christian cause is great: we seek justice in peace, freedom in security, and it should be enough to bring us all into accord. Before establishing this accord must we wait until a devastating, victorious power is at our very doors, ready to threaten our homes, bomb our harbours and our cities, ravage our land?

Our co-operation might take several forms. Compulsory military service is justifiable only for the purpose of defending the soil of our own country. But we cannot prevent Canadians from going voluntarily to Europe to fight for a cause dear to us. That should be the limit of our military contribution outside Canada.

There are many other ways in which we may help and efficiently support the cause of England and her Allies, above all and especially in the economic field.

Wheat, foodstuffs, stores of all kinds, ammunition and raw materials which we can supply are more essential to Great Britain than our volunteers.

Such, no doubt, is the co-operation mentioned in the Speech from the Throne after the announcement that the Government are determined first of all to organize the defence of Canada.

Of this Speech from the Throne, I would repeat what I said of the one which opened the previous session:

To apprehend its full force and consequences, it is necessary to read the Speech from the national viewpoint, with a national pride, and the two together dictate our national duties.

And so Canada, to-day as well as yesterday, means to remain a British country, in full possession of its own liberties, conscious of its responsibilities as a Canadian nation.

It is our duty to defend right here, while co-operating with nations which defend them in other places, the precious liberties our ancestors won at the price of the greatest sacrifices, yea, of life itself.

Honourable senators, allow me to conclude these few remarks by quoting General Weygand. Speaking at a dinner tendered to Col. G. P. Vanier, our Canadian Minister in Paris, by the France-Amérique Committee, that great French soldier said:

Once more, the freedom of the world is threatened. It can be saved only through the union and determination of the nations which, knowing what this freedom costs and that they would be untrue to themselves if they did not resist the ambitions threatening them, are ready to do everything to defend the very dignity of humanity.

Right Hon. ARTHUR MEIGHEN: Honourable members, oppressed as I feel, and as indeed everyone must feel, with emotions which grow out of the gravity of this time, I would very gladly follow the example of the mover of this motion (Hon. Mr. Lambert) and of the seconder (Hon. Mr. Prévost) as well, and speak with the utmost brevity, allowing action more quickly to follow our words, but I do believe I may contribute something to clarify—I do not dare to say inspire—public thought, public feeling, and to promote the unity of our people. Let me postulate a sentence or two before I enter upon what I chiefly have to say.

No one who knows me would for a moment think that any motive can animate me except assistance to my country at this time. In whatever I say as to the Government and its head I am going to keep in mind that this Government is the Government of Canada and represents us all, and that the Prime Minister is no longer to be regarded as the head of a political party. He is the head of our Dominion. In him must reside the honour, the dignity, the sense of duty of our whole nation. It is he who must interpret now our interest and our duty and show us that they are one.

It must not be presumed, because I do not make issue of certain matters now, that I am not thinking something else might be done which is not being done. There are matters on which I might act differently—on which I know I would—but I realize that a united front at the present time, and indeed throughout, if it can be secured, may on balance be of more importance than even the prevailing of a better course. Therefore I defer controversy to the utmost and seek that my words shall have the effect only of encouragement, of assistance, and of rallying to our cause the devotion of our people.