

THE ELIBANK INCIDENT

Lord Elibank's Speech, as reported in the Toronto Mail  
and Empire, August 20th.

"Canadian and United States neutrality in the next war is an impossibility," Viscount Elibank ..... declared here yesterday. "The Dominion should therefore immediately commence construction of a powerful system of air defence" he insisted.

Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto were all within range of European bombing planes, the English peer believed, and yet, he said, this country had done nothing to assist in the policy of Empire Defence, which he has been advocating for such a long time in the House of Lords.

"Canada is at perfect liberty to stay out of another European war, if she can," he admitted, "but such a policy of neutrality is not possible under present conditions. We in the United Kingdom will be forced into that war whether we like it or not; and Canada will not be able to remain neutral any more than the United States was able to keep out of the Great War."

"The next war will come from the air, Lord Elibank believed. "It will certainly be centred around aerial attacks, the most deadly and destructive of all forms of warfare."

Bombing planes could now travel 5,000 miles without refueling, he continued, and could carry enough bombs to destroy civilization on this continent.

"No city in the world will be safe", he warned. "From the Atlantic, your cities of Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal will be bombed, and on the Pacific, Vancouver."

Canadians should think seriously of their position during another European conflict, Lord Elibank believed, because Canada would be in the war from the very beginning.

"I venture to suggest to you in Canada", he went on, "that your problem of air defence is of intense importance to you. I have risen in the House of Lords on numerous occasions, and advocated the cause of air defence in the Empire. South Africa has already realized its position, while Australia and New Zealand are today taking effective steps in this regard."

W.L.M. King Papers, Memoranda and Notes, 1933-1939  
(M.G. 26, J 4, volume 157, pages C112217-C112961)

**PUBLIC ARCHIVES**  
**ARCHIVES PUBLIQUES**  
**CANADA**