

I can recall, as can many of the hon. members whom I see about me, Sir Wilfrid Laurier standing in his place and making his declaration of support of the action of the government of that time.

When you leave the field of military endeavour and go to that of naval operations you find the same provision. As I have endeavoured to explain, that statute was not the outcome of bitter partisanship, it was a real effort to provide that we should arrive at a common understanding, supported by all the peoples of the country. Of course, there is one step further. You get back to the root principle that you cannot escape the responsibilities of government whether you would or not. For the crown must take the action and the crown is advised by the government. The government places its life at stake in the House of Commons of the day. Just as on that occasion Sir Wilfrid Laurier supported the government, I doubt not that if the time should ever come again when it should be thought essential to take steps for the defence of Canada abroad, there would be such unanimity of opinion as to make it quite apparent that we had a common purpose and a common need to serve, namely, the maintenance of the integrity of our people and our country.

If I have been correct in what I have said, and I have endeavoured to put it as fairly as possible, it will be necessary to depart from the general plan followed by the Prime Minister and refer briefly to the present situation. It must be known to all that it was five years after the armistice was signed before the last treaty of peace was signed with an enemy. The treaty of peace with Turkey was signed in 1923, after five long years of uncertainty, unrest, discussion and negotiation. Then followed, during the twenties, what the Prime Minister has designated properly as an era of peace-loving activities on the part of the peoples of the world. Peace, peace—public opinion wanted peace. With peace you had the demand for disarmament, and the action taken by the League of Nations looking to that end. The covenant of the league provided for disarmament. I have always thought, and I still think, that a great mistake was made in not making it perfectly clear that while we were going to disarm Germany, we would also undertake to disarm ourselves. When I say "ourselves," I do not mean the British Empire; I mean ourselves, the rest of the world, the world in arms. It did not happen. And there gradually grew up, instead of that demand for peace, a sense on the part of

Germany's sixty million people that they had not been fairly treated, until in the end Germany began to rearm.

Then Great Britain—let us not limit it to Great Britain—the British Empire, including Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa, each of which was thinking not of arms or armaments, but of the creation of a public opinion, for peace, good will cooperation, expansion of trade and business, of the time when the war drums would throb no longer and the battle-flags would be furled, was confronted with this new condition. We saw gradually growing up in Germany and other countries that sense of injustice whose final outcome we see to-day. This great commonwealth of nations found itself unarmed and unprepared. It had kept its word, and it had created a public opinion such as the world had never seen before. I wonder if it is generally realized what was meant by that great ballot which took place in England, a year and a half or more ago, when public opinion demonstrated its desire for peace, a desire shared by all the countries of the commonwealth.

But to-day, sir, I say deliberately that the German will or mind is the will for war, not the will for peace. My observation as well as my reading lead me to that conclusion. Instead of the old theory that prosperity and peace go hand in hand, we see feverish activity in arsenal and factory, the creation of artillery and bombs and aircraft for the purposes of destruction, and appeals to that sentiment which since the dawn of history has been one of the most powerful to which an appeal can be made, the appeal of patriotism; of achievement by force of arms; the broadening of acres; the extension of the national territory. So to-day we find a situation which I shall not discuss, any more than to say that I entirely agree with the statement concerning it which has been made by the Prime Minister.

In this very country to-day there are emissaries of Germany—I say that on my responsibility as a member of this house—talking to minorities about their rights. A friend of mine in the legal profession was consulted on this matter by an old German; it is the younger ones, not the older men who are swayed and moved by such appeals. Look at what has developed in Czechoslovakia. A minority is demanding—what? Action on the part of its national homeland, military action if necessary, for the purpose of giving that minority what it desires. No language that can be used in this house would be too strong a statement of the difficulties of the situation in Europe.