

I will endeavour, in the course of my remarks, to give my own opinion on this subject. I am not a country doctor; I am just a lawyer who tried to learn the history of his country and to give to his fellow-citizens the benefit of whatever experience he had acquired in this house. After the great war, the whole world hoped for eternal peace but to-day, after nearly twenty years of peace I find the same spirit of militarism still rampant.

Coming back to what I said about the part taken by Canada in two foreign wars, I want to mention the fact that it happened at a time when our expenditures were at their lowest and when we were least prepared for war. In 1899, at the time of the Transvaal war, our militia estimates were practically nil. Did the lack of militia estimates prevent us from taking part in that war? Not at all. In 1914, following the 1911 period and after the bill respecting our contribution of \$35,000,000 had been defeated in the Senate, we were still finding ourselves in a period where no provision had been made towards national defence. Did that prevent parliament from voting in favour of our participation in that imperial war? Not at all.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that we should make a distinction between these two matters: "Increase in the estimates for the protection of our country," and "participation in imperial wars, sending expeditionary forces or making direct contributions to Great Britain."

We should consider now what will be the future status of our country. We are part of the British Empire. Are we satisfied to belong to the commonwealth of British nations? Personally, I am.

Our world status could be settled in two different ways. We should endeavour to obtain an effective commercial and economic protection. We might become an integral part of the republic to the south. I cannot accept that plan. We might gain our independence right now. If the Canadian parliament were to proclaim its independence, I have no doubt that Great Britain would be at a loss to find means to prevent a nation of eleven million people from proclaiming its independence while at the same time maintaining bonds of friendship with her. We have to choose between those three policies. Are we to become independent? What would our independence mean in the world, from a military standpoint? Do you think that we would enjoy the sympathy of our great neighbour to the south if we were not sheltered by the might of the British commonwealth of nations? I wonder if the United States would still have the same consideration for

Canada. Because we are a growing nation, because we have not yet reached the phase of maturity and because we still have to rely on somebody else for the development of our territory, we must not as yet become independent. Surely our population is too small to defend the country against an aggressor.

Could we be an integral part of the United States without increasing our defence estimates? Do you believe for one moment, Sir, that the United States would let us sit quietly without contributing our share of taxation for the defence of our common territory? Considering that the United States are spending 400 million dollars to increase their navy, do you think that we would be exempt from contributing our share of taxes for such armaments? Being a part of that great republic we would be submerged by their 120 million inhabitants and we would pay our share of all future wars, which may not happen but which nevertheless cost money. We would have to make those expenses but our say in the matter would be that of ten or eleven million people as against 120 millions; our influence would only be a twelfth or a thirteenth of what we have to-day as part of the British Empire. To-day, we have an autonomous parliament. If we are allowed to express such different views as have been heard in the last few days, it is due to the fact that we have a free parliament. We can approve or denounce any measure brought down by the government. Such is our present status.

Now let us look at other countries of the world. What do we find? At the present time nations are divided into two groups. We have, first, the empires possessing vast territories: Great Britain, France, Russia, United States. How have Great Britain, France and Russia acquired their territories? By resorting to violence, to war. If Great Britain is in possession of our country to-day, it is through conquest; if she holds India, it is through force; if she took possession of Australia, it is through occupancy; if she is in possession of Transvaal and South Africa, it is the result of war.

Look at the great French empire in Africa. You will find that it is the result of conquest. Russia has conquered Siberia and other parts of Asia. United States have not so many possessions. But how have they acquired them? West Indies, Cuba, which is under their protectorate, the Philippines are all in their power as a result of the Spanish war. If those nations have been able to extend their territories in the world and if their