

ciate. What, I wonder, would be the condition of Europe to-day if Britain had not endeavoured, as she has at every moment, to avert or circumscribe conflict? She has been the great pacifier. If at the moment the Spanish civil war has not grown to proportions involving the whole of Europe, and possibly other parts of the world as well, too much credit cannot be given to Britain. We shall do well to keep this thought in mind as we discuss our relations with the British Empire.

Some Hon. SENATORS: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. GRIESBACH: That is the statement of the Prime Minister—I shall come back to it in a moment—and I draw your attention to the concluding words of the Prime Minister's epitome of the Imperial Conferences of 1923 and 1926, which I read at the outset: "until support comes from the outside."

Now, where do we expect support to come from? Of course we expect it to come from Great Britain herself. In the debates which took place with respect to the rearmament vote in the British House of Commons, the vote involving seven and a half billions of dollars, the whole discussion concerned the defence of Great Britain and the Empire. Yet, when we come to the discussion in our own House, notwithstanding the speech which I quoted a moment ago we find quite a different attitude. I want to read what the Prime Minister says at page 271 of Hansard.

But I do wish to say at once that, as far as the estimates presented to Parliament at this session are concerned, any increase placed there has been only and solely because of what the Government believe to be necessary for the defence of Canada, and for Canada alone. The estimates have not been framed with any thought of participation in European wars. They have not been framed as a result of any combined effort or consultation with the British authorities.

I want to contrast the attitude taken by the British Commons when they discussed the rearmament vote of seven and a half billion dollars "for the defence of the British Empire"—thereby showing their willingness to help us—with the attitude of our Prime Minister that we are to hold out "until support comes from the outside," and the debate in our own House of Commons wherein it was urged that the vote was for the defence of Canada alone. I would point out the fact that throughout the whole of that debate, which lasted a week, there was not a word said by any member on either side of the House which raised the question of our obligation for Imperial defence, or any suggestion of co-operation in Imperial defence. That is a very important thing to remember, because there is going to be an Imperial Conference this year, which will be attended by delegates from Canada, and we are told that the first item of business, and the

greatest item of discussion, will be Imperial defence. I want to raise the question now, and, in view of what I have read, I want to get an answer from the Government, if I can, as to just where we stand with respect to the Imperial Conference. Because the House of Commons of Canada passed the recent defence estimates upon the assurance of the Prime Minister that they were for the defence of Canada alone, is it to be assumed that there were no European entanglements nor Empire commitments? Or because there was not a word raising the question of collective security or of co-operation within the Empire, is it to be assumed that the Government of this country has a mandate to go to the Imperial Conference and refuse all forms of co-operation? That is the view taken by some people. I have here an article on national defence, published in the *Globe and Mail* of February 24 last, sent from Ottawa by William Marchington, which concludes by saying:

One thing the debate of the past few days has done: it has forestalled any commitment concerning Imperial defence at the forthcoming conference in London, so far as Canada is concerned.

I want to ask the leader of the Government specifically whether the Government regards the silence of the House of Commons on the question of Imperial defence as a mandate to refuse any co-operation that may be asked for at the next Imperial Conference.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: May be asked for or volunteered.

Hon. Mr. GRIESBACH: Now, what is our position to-day? I submit that in our failure to carry out the agreement we made with respect to the defence of our harbours and coasts and our sea-borne trade, we have abandoned our sovereign status. What is the use of pretending to be a sovereign state? What is the use of being the fifth trading power in the world if we fail to keep our agreements and protect our trade? What of our inability to protect our neutrality? I submit that we are back to the colonial status we occupied before we were extricated by the Statute of Westminster. We are accepting help from Great Britain, and in the most specific terms our legislators in another place refrained with persistence—if one can refrain with persistence—from any discussion of this very important question. We are willing to accept, but we are not willing to give; and that touches very nearly, it seems to me, our self-respect and dignity as a sovereign state. I know the British Empire is a unique organization. Nothing like it has ever been seen before. It has constantly embarrassed and surprised writers on international law, and I