

the property of the crown in the right of the sovereign at Westminster. But when the sovereign sent his representative abroad with the commission in his pocket to govern any part of his dominion, before confederation, he had the power to alienate the land, the mines, the resources, and he alienated them to those who were entitled to them under regulations made, not in London or "Downing street," but by his advisers in Canada.

So we Canadians were given this heritage. England, about which some critical reference was made by a gentleman not long since, spent not thousands but millions of pounds on fortresses and guns and ships, for instance at Esquimalt and at Halifax. Those fortifications were paid for by the British taxpayer. In the year after confederation—I will go back just to that year—the British taxpayer provided more money for the construction of defences in Canada than we did for many years afterwards. It is within my memory when British garrisons were withdrawn from Halifax and Esquimalt. I can recall also when the north Atlantic squadron ceased to be based on Halifax.

These were contributions made by the British taxpayer to the maintenance of Canada. These vast expenditures were the free gifts of the British people to those who settled and made here a new home. That leaves out, of course, the part of the province of Quebec where French sovereigns had made grants long prior to that time, which of course were recognized, at least to some extent, by the treaty of 1763.

So we to-day still have the choice—unity in common allegiance to the British crown, freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations or, for a time, an independent nation. And I believe, sir, rightly or wrongly, that as we preserve and maintain that association, so we shall assist in preserving the peace of the world.

Mr. J. S. WOODSWORTH (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, let me say that I appreciate keenly the difficult position in which the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) is placed in these critical times. He must carry a very heavy responsibility. I congratulate him upon the general survey of the international situation which he gave in the earlier part of his speech this afternoon. It seems to me that the debate to-day marks a decided advance in the conduct of the affairs of our country. I have known sessions when the estimates of the Department of External Affairs were passed without any discussion whatever. Surely we have passed

beyond the stage where that ought to be possible.

The speeches which have been given thus far in the debate by the Prime Minister and the leader of the opposition (Mr. Bennett) reveal very divergent points of view with regard to what ought to be the foreign policy of this country. It seems to me that nothing is gained by minimizing the differences which exist in Canada. The Prime Minister speaks about the policy of his government being one of peace and friendliness. Well, I assume that we can all subscribe to that, but as soon as we begin to get down to concrete cases we shall differ very widely indeed. I would urge that to-day phrases are not enough; that the situation is too serious, and that we must try to outline much more definitely than we have yet done what is to be our policy in future. Personally I am inclined to think I would be much nearer the policy of the Prime Minister than to that of the leader of the opposition, —I was going to add, if I knew what the Prime Minister's policy really was!

Mr. BENNETT: Hear, hear.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I would, however, say very frankly that I appreciate the forthright way in which the leader of the opposition has set down his policy. We know where he stands; and I think it is time that the whole country knew where the government stood as regards this and also some other matters.

There was one thing said by the Prime Minister which, I think, was advanced for the first time, and that is that foreign nations are not likely to pick out Canada for attack. I am glad he has taken that position, because in a great many quarters the main reason for an enlarged defence program has been that we might be attacked in force by Japan or by some other nation located a long distance away. If the Prime Minister is correct, we may very well ask why we should have any very considerable defence in this country, and we should require that what defence is necessary in the opinion of those who advocate defence, should be limited to one particular kind.

The Prime Minister, I thought, stated one matter very clearly when he asked, are we likely to be drawn into war through our connection with the league? And he came to the conclusion, after considerable argument that he did not think we would be. I might point out that if we in Canada interpret in future our obligations as lightly as we have done in the past, I can easily understand that the keeping of our obligations is not going to

[Mr. Bennett.]