

In the first place, it is clear that this was a wholly unnecessary and avoidable war. All the bloodshed might have been spared. All the treasure which was spent, all the prodigious effort which was put forth, might have been devoted to the higher purposes of advancing civilization. All the suffering on land and sea, all the unspeakable anguish of wives, of mothers, and of families, need not have been. What caused this war? Who is responsible for this war? It is clear that responsibility for this war lies with the German people in their lust of dominion, and in the criminal and insane ambition of their Emperor and the military caste surrounding him. And if this is so, must not justice be done? I put forward the view that if those who are responsible for this war are not brought to punishment it will be the greatest failure of retributive justice in the history of mankind. The indictment before an international tribunal of those in authority in Germany and the other countries allied with her, before and during the war, their solemn trial for conspiracy against the liberties of nations, for breach of public law, and for the barbarities and atrocities which have been perpetrated by land and sea, would in my view do more to prevent the possibility of repetition of an attempt at world dominion on the part of any nation than any league of peace that can be devised by the genius or resourcefulness of statesmen.

There is another matter, Mr. Speaker, and that is that Germany and her allies by reason of their responsibility for this war, should be made to pay to the extent that they can pay for the war expenditure to which the Allies have been put, and I am glad to observe that that is the position taken by Great Britain. Canada did not desire to enter this war; we were forced to take part in order to save ourselves and to assist in saving the world. It seems to me therefore that those who are responsible for the war should be made to pay to the extent that they are able to pay for the expenditure to which Canada has been put. There is no sign, so far as I can observe, of repentance on the part of Germany to-day. On the contrary, there seems to be a certain degree of arrogance by reason of the fact that Germany was not invaded. A war indemnity spread over a long period of years would do more than anything else to bring home to the German people the enormity of the offence which they have committed against civilization. That is an

argument which I am sure they would understand.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the armistice having been declared, the Government of this country, like the governments of all other countries, was at once confronted with the problem of reconstruction. The Government could not, of course, forecast events. But we had taken concerted measures, to be put into effect immediately after the conclusion of peace. Those measures related to two principal things, demobilization and reconstruction. The problem was a great and difficult one. In one sense it is easier to get from a peace basis to a war basis than from a war basis to a peace basis. We have a longer time to get to a war basis from

9 p.m. a peace basis than we have to get from a basis of war to a basis of peace after the war. We had four years to mobilize,—four years to organize the industry, the agriculture, the commerce, the trade and finances of the country, upon a war basis. We have had a few weeks to demobilize and reconstruct, so that the country may be once again upon a peace basis. Consider the problem involved in demobilization. We have over 300,000 soldiers overseas, and 50,000 dependents, to be brought home, all naturally desirous of returning to their homes and their dear ones as soon as possible. It has been the policy of the Government, notwithstanding the economic problems involved, to bring those men home just as quickly as possible; in order that they may again meet their friends from whom they have been separated for years. That has been the policy of the Government, and since November, 1918, over 50,000 soldiers have been returned to this country, and some eight or ten thousand of their dependents. In addition, there have been demobilized in Canada, struck from off the strength of units here, some 50,000 additional. So that there have been demobilized, since the conclusion of the armistice, over 100,000 of the troops of Canada, and many thousands of their dependents. Consider the situation,—the scarcity of shipping, troops to be returned, not only to Canada, but to Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and India. There are forces still in all the principal theatres of war. Transport is required for supplies for those forces. There is a great shortage of world shipping. Notwithstanding that, notwithstanding the fact that it is winter, that we have but two ports on our Atlantic coast, that we have limited railway facilities, we have been bringing back our men at the rate of 25,000 to