

6. *RELATIONS WITH BULGARIA, ROUMANIA, AND HUNGARY,
STATEMENT OF PRIME MINISTER, MARCH 5, 1941.*

I should like to make a brief statement to the House on the present situation in the Balkans, as it affects nationals and citizens of certain of those countries.

Acting upon instructions from the government of the United Kingdom, His Majesty's minister at Sofia has broken off diplomatic relations with Bulgaria to-day. There is no Canadian diplomatic mission in Bulgaria and there are no Bulgarian diplomatic or consular representatives in this country. There was, therefore, no occasion for any action by the Canadian government with regard to the severance of diplomatic relations.

The breaking off of diplomatic relations does not necessarily bring about a state of war. On the other hand, in breaking off diplomatic relations the United Kingdom felt it could not overlook the action of the Bulgarian government in aligning Bulgaria with the axis powers and in permitting German forces to enter Bulgaria and to use that country as a base from which to conduct hostile operations.

Action has been taken and is being taken by the Canadian government to protect Canadian interests during the period that may intervene between the breaking off of diplomatic relations and actual hostilities should such take place. Action has already been taken by Order in Council making Bulgaria proscribed territory which means that all transactions with Bulgaria will be subjected to the regime of the trading with the enemy regulations. In this manner it is made unlawful to conduct any transactions involving, directly or indirectly, economic aid to the enemy. Precautionary action is being undertaken to prevent any transactions that might result in assistance to the enemy.

Police action that is necessary to preserve the security of the state is, of course, being undertaken. While this is so, Bulgarian nationals and persons of Bulgarian descent will not be disturbed so long as they show by their conduct that they are rendering loyal obedience to the laws and institutions of this country.

The action taken to make Bulgaria proscribed territory extends also to Hungary. Hungary is a country with which diplomatic relations are maintained by the United Kingdom. On the other hand it is not possible entirely to overlook the fact of the contiguity of Hungary to territory under German domination, and Hungary's alignment with the axis and the according by Hungary to the enemy of privileges which are not consistent with neutrality. Hungary maintains a consulate general in Montreal and a consulate in Winnipeg. The action taken in making Hungary