

to it. He then deprecated public controversy in regard to what he called "hypothetical contingencies".

Ten days later, on September 27, he issued another statement which, since it is brief, I shall quote in full. He has quoted it, but I will repeat it as part of my speech:

The Canadian government is continuing to keep in closest touch with the grave developments in the European situation.

The government is making preparations for any contingency and for the immediate summoning of parliament, if efforts, which are still being made to preserve the peace of Europe, should fail.

For our country to keep united is all-important. To that end in whatever we say or do we must seek to avoid controversies and divisions that might seriously impair effective and concerted action when parliament meets.

The government is in complete accord with the statement Prime Minister Chamberlain made to the world to-day.

The Prime Minister quoted Mr. Chamberlain at some length. I am going to quote one paragraph of Mr. Chamberlain's address. He said:

But if I were convinced that any nation had made up its mind to dominate the world by fear of its force, I should feel that it must be resisted.

When asked by a newspaperman as to whether he meant that his government supported Mr. Chamberlain when the latter said that any nation which sought to dominate "by fear of its force" would be resisted, the Prime Minister replied:

I mean just what I have said. Mr. Chamberlain's statement is before the world for all to read.

That is quoted from the *Toronto Globe and Mail*.

Up to that time I had not issued any statement, but the following day, September 28, I issued a statement which I wish to quote because it was published in the press only.

During the terribly critical situation in Europe there have been those who felt that my attitude towards that situation, as leader of the National Conservative party in Canada, should be made known. I have thus far refused to make any statement, on the ground that, not only because of his huge majority, but because he is the head of the government, the Prime Minister of Canada alone can speak with any authority for this country. Certainly no word of mine could be helpful, either to him or to the empire.

At such a time as this the duty of the government in a country such as ours, is very difficult and very serious, and I have no intention, for the sake of gaining any petty political advantage, of adding to its difficulties. In a wide reading of the press, I have observed that in England during this crisis no political leader or other prominent public man (except a few communists) has done aught but co-operate with Britain's Prime Minister, though

undoubtedly there are some who disagree with Mr. Chamberlain's actions, but, for patriotic reasons, there is a total absence of any criticism.

I may add that up to that point there was no criticism in England. After the crisis passed there was a good deal. I went on:

All stand shoulder to shoulder, avoiding political or other differences so far as possible. That is as it should be, and we can do no better here than follow the example that the people of Britain set us. That is my conception of my duty at the moment—particularly in view of the fact that I have not been called into consultation by the Canadian government, and therefore am dependent upon the newspapers and the radio for my information.

Undoubtedly the government has much fuller information than it is possible for any of the rest of us to possess. Indeed, outside the government itself no one in Canada can know the full details of Britain's own position.

In Mr. King's press release of last evening, he said that the Canadian government "is in complete accord with the statement Prime Minister Chamberlain made to the world to-day."

With that position I am in full agreement. I can assure Mr. King that whatever steps he and the government take in support of Mr. Chamberlain and the empire will have the full cooperation of the National Conservative party and its leader.

That was my statement at that time. During the recent crisis of March, a few weeks ago, when the Prime Minister made no statement, I was again pressed very strongly by members of my own party and by various sections of this country to make my position known. Czechoslovakia was taken by Germany on, I believe, Wednesday night or Thursday night. On the following Saturday and Sunday, March 18 and 19, I waited, expecting—frankly—that the Prime Minister would call in the leaders of the various parties. On Sunday evening, as he had not called us in, I issued a statement which I intend to read. It is not very lengthy. I am sorry I have to read so much, but it is to keep the record straight. My statement, issued on March 19, Sunday evening, was as follows:

As leader of the National Conservative party, I have been strongly urged to express my views on the present world situation.

At such a time it should be our sole desire to serve our country in a manner that will help all our Canadian people to remain united in thought and action; and I have no intention of adding to the difficulties of the government, or of embarrassing them in any manner. This situation is far above political manoeuvring. It should be made quite clear also that only the Canadian Prime Minister can speak with authority for Canada, particularly in view of the fact that I have no confidential information of any kind.

I feel that to-day world conditions are even more critical than they were in June, 1914, because now an unscrupulous, militaristic dictator is attempting to get possession of world power, thus endangering the democratic liberties which are part of our very life.