

*The Address—Mr. Manion*

unpopular question of profiteering. I say, sir, that to-day I know of no more important question and no more important policy for this government to adopt than to insist that there is no profiteering during this war. By profiteering I mean unfair or excessive profits made by taking advantage of the critical condition in which our country and our empire find themselves. So far as I am concerned this is not a new thought. I have been expressing it for many years, particularly in London and Toronto just a year ago this month. I expressed it again the other day in a statement I gave to the press the day Poland and Germany went to war. That was two days before Britain and France declared war, one week ago to-day, and for the sake of the record I am going to take this opportunity of placing this brief statement upon *Hansard*. It was as follows:

In this crisis, as in those of September and March last, I refrained from making statements regarding the international situation, because I felt that, at this terribly critical hour in world affairs, it is the duty not only of our public men, but of all others, to endeavour to unify and solidify Canadian public opinion. To hold our country together is the first duty of all of us.

But, unhappily, war between Germany and Poland is now in progress, and undoubtedly England and France, in accordance with their pledges, will be forced to declare war on the side of Poland and against international gangsterism, as displayed by Hitler throughout the past year. In this conflict Christianity, democracy, and personal liberty are fighting for their existence.

Now that the die is cast, I feel that I should reiterate my position as leader of the National Conservative party. I adhere completely to the position which was set out clearly by me on March the 30th last in the House of Commons, when I declared my complete agreement with Sir Wilfrid Laurier's declaration that "when Britain is at war Canada is at war."

There can be no neutrality for Canada while Britain is engaged in a war of life and death. Therefore, in my opinion the united voice of Canada will call for full cooperation with Britain and France in this terrible conflict.

I wish to leave the next paragraph until I have read the two remaining paragraphs, because I should like to deal with it separately. The press release continues:

The government during this crisis has not followed the course taken by Mr. Chamberlain by calling into consultation myself or the leaders of the other parties. Nevertheless, as in the other crises, so in this, I informed Mr. King that I hold myself available for consultation and cooperation at any time, and any assistance I can give to Mr. King and his government will be freely given.

I learn by the press that a special session of parliament is being called for next Thursday. In view of this, I am communicating to my followers the request that they be in Ottawa a day or two in advance of the session.

[Mr. Manion.]

And now I shall read the paragraph I passed over. It is as follows:

At the same time, in giving this cooperation, it must be the steadfast determination of all of us that there be no profiteering of any kind—no unfair advantage taken by anyone—no enrichment for some while others are offering their lives.

I repeat that I consider that principle perhaps the most important that the government can adopt in carrying out this cooperation. I believe that all Canadians desire that that be carried out, and they desire it ardently. They feel that anything made in the way of excess profits by anyone at a time like this is, in a sense, blood money. The idea of some growing rich on the suffering of their fellow-Canadians is repugnant to everyone. It must not be permitted; there should be an absolute and rigid control to prevent it. Anyone taking unfair advantage of the Canadian people in this critical time deserves the severest condemnation and punishment. If allowed it will, to my mind, wreck our system, as surely as would a successful Hitler.

Our system is on trial. While the volunteer is offering his life the profiteer and the racketeer must be eliminated. The hon. member for Algoma West expressed it as equality of sacrifice, and I agree that that is the desire of all good Canadians.

Now, one further suggestion. I think the government should take immediate steps to mobilize our industry, to coordinate industrial production and to ensure full and effective aid from our industrial life to Canada and our allies at this trying time. In the last war the industrialists of Canada did a magnificent piece of work. They were complimented on their work by the British war cabinet, when they were thanked for the splendid assistance they gave to Great Britain.

Another suggestion, and it is this: Let not the abuses of political patronage and favouritism interfere with our national efforts. Canada as a whole is fighting—not one party—and Canada demands that we do our duty fearlessly and fairly. Let service and quality and honesty rule in all our vast expenditures. We must not let any scandal destroy our efforts.

Then, another suggestion. Based upon personal knowledge and experience I should like to point out that one of the grave errors in the conduct of the last war was the permitting of huge numbers of unfit men to get into the forces. I say, with knowledge, that in 1916, two years after the war began there were in some battalions in England as high as one-third of the personnel unfit for service, one-third of the personnel who should never have been accepted at all. This condition was brought about by two chief reasons. Gentlemen who