

The Canadian people know that they occupy in the world a privileged position which enables them to play a role of first importance and they intend to contribute in their capacity as a free people to the development of civilized international relations and to the triumph of peace. These aspirations and these common ideals are the ideals of Mr. King and no one has worked more determinedly than he for their realization.

We have not sought to administer a country as great and as complex as ours by relying on economic and social theories of dreamers who aspire to live in a world other than the one in which we actually exist. We have never believed that the point of view of a single region or a single group ought necessarily to determine the policy of Canada as a whole.

It has been necessary, on the contrary, to balance opinions and to find in the diverse elements which make up our population the characteristics common to each, and thereby to formulate a truly national policy. Such a result has not been obtained without sacrifice on the part of one element or another and those who seek to understand our policy only in terms of sacrifices necessarily made can never grasp it nor define it.

But if we take the trouble to analyse the why and wherefore of each of the principal policies of the government since the outbreak of the war, we can find in it a consistency and a logic of policy which is really Canadian and which takes account of the common aspirations of our people.

First and foremost, Canada did not wish this war. It submitted to it like Poland, Holland, Belgium, Norway, France, England, Russia, United States, Mexico, Brazil and so many other countries. Conscious that, some day or other, we would be engulfed by the force of events, we did not wait for the attack on our territory. We have freely and voluntarily decided to participate on our own account and for our own ends, shortly after England and France made the same decision.

Doubtless, our loyalty towards the Crown and our association with the nations of the British Commonwealth were factors in our decision, but this decision was a free and voluntary one made by a people who wish to remain faithful to their allegiance and to their alliances in a moment of common danger. It has, therefore, a most profound significance. We have affirmed without ambiguity at this most solemn hour in our history that Canada is the master of its own destiny and we have created a precedent that will determine the law of evolution of our country.