

people of Canada that there are duties of citizenship, which in times of peace may have been lightly regarded, if not altogether neglected. With all our boasted civilization, advancement, and progress of the last fifty years, there is but one thought in the minds of the people to-day, and that is war. The skill, the genius, and the energies of the nations of Europe have been applied and devoted to maintaining what they erroneously termed 'an armed peace' by the preparation of the most tremendous and terrible engines of destruction ever conceived of. Rumbblings of distant thunder have been heard and dark and threatening clouds have been visible on the horizon for several years. These have at last burst forth like a tornado, and threaten the whole world with the most terrific and devastating war the world has ever seen. The greatest disaster of recorded time is at hand; many millions of men are now engaged in one of the most desperate and fearful struggles the mind of man can conceive of.

Under these circumstances, we may well ask ourselves where we stand, what position we occupy, what are the sentiments of our people in regard to the situation. As a part of the British Empire, when that empire becomes involved in war, we of necessity are involved in war and subject to all that that implies.

How the British Empire became involved in the struggle is familiar to every one. The British Government exerted every means in their power, in the face of great provocations to the contrary to prevent war, and have sought peace with an earnestness worthy of responsible statesmen—not a dishonourable peace, but a peace in keeping with the traditions of the British Empire, and in keeping with the civilization of the age in which we live. The proposal made to the British Government by the autocrat who to-day controls the German Empire, through his Chancellor, in return for British neutrality in the war into which he had plunged Europe, was an insult to the honour of the British nation, and was well characterized by Premier Asquith as an infamous one. It was proposed that Great Britain should remain passive and allow the despot of Germany, if he could accomplish it, to become the despot of Europe—to strip France, Great Britain's ally, of her possessions, and to overrun Belgium with her armies, in defiance of treaties the most sacred and binding to which she was a party.

War has been forced upon the Empire,  
[Mr. Sutherland.]

and Britain has gone to war rather than have a dishonourable peace that would be unworthy of the traditions of the Empire. We believe their cause is just, and—as Premier Asquith stated in the Imperial House of Commons when asking for a vote of credit of £100,000,000, and power to raise an army of 500,000 men—Great Britain is fighting to fulfil a solemn international obligation, which in private life would have been regarded as an obligation, not only of law, but of honour, and, secondly, to vindicate the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed in defiance of international good faith by the arbitrary will of a strong and overmastering power. No nation ever entered into a great controversy with a clearer and stronger conviction that it was fighting, not for aggression, not for the maintenance of its own selfish interest, but in defence of principles the maintenance of which were vital to the civilization of the world.

British rule has given British subjects the greatest degree of peace, liberty and protection enjoyed by any people in the world, and has been the means of bringing the same to other nations as well. It is, therefore, not surprising under these circumstances that offers have been received from every one of the self-governing dominions of the Empire of help to the limit of their resources, both in men and money. There is no mistaking the sentiment of the people of Canada. To-day we are ready to face the issue, and justly so. The British Empire has been forced into a war to redeem its pledged word and insulted honour. This is no time for discussion or hesitation; all that can be done must be done.

Among the citizens of Canada are many people of German extraction or birth, who are held in high esteem as citizens, and loyal subjects of His Majesty the King, and who are not in sympathy with the autocratic military, mad ambitions of the German Emperor and his Government. The attitude and the sentiments of the German citizens of Canada with regard to the present war have, I believe, been clearly and truly expressed in a letter of the 15th instant, published in the local press of my county, from the pen of Prof. F. V. Riethdorf, of Woodstock College, a part of which I am going to quote, as follows:

We must deeply sympathize with the German people in the sufferings and dangers brought upon them by their ruling classes, by their oligarchic, insane, military government. It is the Germany of the 'clinchd fist' and the 'drawn sword' of the 'shining armour' and the 'sabre rattling in the scabbard' that calls for