

Immediate Offer of Expeditionary Force

The first act of the Canadian Government was to send the following telegram to the Government of the United Kingdom.

August 1, 1914.

Secret. In view of the impending danger of war involving the empire my advisers are anxiously considering the most effective means of rendering every possible aid and they will welcome any suggestions and advice which Imperial naval and military authorities may deem expedient to offer. They are confident that a considerable force would be available for service abroad. A question has been mooted respecting the status of any Canadian force serving abroad as under section sixty-nine of Canadian Militia Act the active militia can only be placed on active service beyond Canada for the defence thereof. It has been suggested that regiments might enlist as Imperial troops for stated period, Canadian Government undertaking to make all necessary financial provision for their equipment, pay and maintenance. This proposal has not yet been maturely considered here and my advisers would be glad to have views of Imperial Government thereon.

This message was sent on Saturday, August 1st. On the same day the following telegram which was immediately made public was sent through His Royal Highness, the Governor-General to the Home Government.

My advisers, while expressing their most earnest hope that peaceful solution of existing international difficulties may be achieved and their strong desire to co-operate in every possible way for that purpose, wish me to convey to His Majesty's Government the firm assurance that, if unhappily war should ensue, the Canadian people will be united in a common resolve to put forth every effort and to make every sacrifice necessary to ensure the integrity and maintain the honour of our Empire.

To this telegram the following reply was received the next day.

With reference to your telegram 1st August, His Majesty's Government gratefully welcome the assurance of your Government that in the present crisis they may rely on wholehearted co-operation of the people of Canada.

To the secret despatch sent on Saturday, August 1st, the following answer was received on Monday, August 3rd, and is doubly significant in that it shows that even on that date the Home Government was not only using every endeavour to preserve peace, but had hopes of peace being maintained.

With reference to your cypher telegram 2nd August, please inform your ministers that their patriotic readiness to render every aid is deeply appreciated by His Majesty's Government but they would prefer postponing detailed observations on the suggestion put forward, pending further developments. As soon as the situation appears to call for further measures I will telegraph you again.

On the 4th of August, on the evening of the day on which war between Germany and England was declared, the following telegram in further answer to the first communication sent from the Government of Canada was received from the Government of Great Britain.

Though there seems to be no immediate necessity for any request on our part for an expeditionary force from Canada, I think, in view of their generous offer, your ministers would be wise to take all legislative and other steps by which they would be enabled without delay to provide such a force in case it should be required later.

Two days later, on the 6th of August, the Home Government sent the following despatch.

With reference to my telegram of August 4, His Majesty's

Government gratefully accept offer of your ministers to send expeditionary force to this country, and would be glad if it could be despatched as soon as possible. Suggested composition follows.

Gift of 1,000,000 Bags of Flour

On the same day, the 6th of August, the following telegram offering a gift of 1,000,000 bags of flour on behalf of the people of Canada to the people of the United Kingdom was sent through His Royal Highness, the Governor-General.

My advisers request me to inform you that the people of Canada through their Government desire to offer one million bags of flour of ninety-eight pounds each as a gift to the people of United Kingdom to be placed at the disposal of His Majesty's Government and to be used for such purposes as they may deem expedient.

Next day the following appreciative acceptance of this gift was received from the Home Government in the following words.

On behalf of the people of the United Kingdom His Majesty's Government accept with deep gratitude the splendid and welcome gift of flour from Canada which will be of the greatest use for the steadying of prices and relief of distress in this country. We can never forget the generosity and promptitude of this gift and the patriotism from which it springs.

Other action expressive of Canada's good-will towards France, and a desire to show the sympathy of the Canadian people with the French as allies of Britain was considered by the Cabinet. An account of the action taken by the Cabinet is given in the Premier's own words in the speech delivered by him on the assembling of Parliament quoted elsewhere at length in the present issue.

The Official Announcement of War and Action Taken Thereon

An extra of the Canada Gazette published on Wednesday, August 5th, is an interesting historic document, in that it contains the official record of the despatch sent from England to Canada announcing the outbreak of war between Britain and Germany and the action taken by the Canadian Government consequent upon this announcement.

The despatch announcing the outbreak of war is in the following words.

Ottawa, 4th August, 1914

His Royal Highness the Governor-General received a telegraphic despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies at 8.45 this evening, announcing that war has broken out with Germany.

The action of the Government, as recorded, was two-fold; first, to summon Parliament, and second, to place at the disposal of His Majesty for service in the Royal Navy, the *Niobe* and the *Rainbow*, together with the officers and seamen serving on these vessels, and to place on active service the naval volunteer forces under the Naval Service Act of 1910. Action in this particular was further anticipated by the purchase on the day before the outbreak, but after consultation with the Admiralty, of two submarines which were in the shipyards of Seattle at the time, and the manning of them with crews for the purpose of Coast defence and the protection of shipping on the Pacific.

The Orders-in-Council referring to the transfer of vessels and the placing of the naval volunteer forces on active service were supplemented by several others