

impending catastrophe by having recourse to every possible peaceful means to effect a solution of the momentous issues of this period of transition and change in world affairs.

Telegram of August 25, 1939, from the Prime Minister of Canada to the chief of the government of Italy.

At this critical moment in the history of the world I wish, on behalf of the people of Canada, to join in the appeals which have been made to you to use your great power and influence to ensure a peaceful settlement of the issues that threaten the peace of mankind.

The people of Canada are firmly convinced that it should be possible, by conference and negotiation, to find a just settlement of all existing problems without resort to force. They are prepared to join with the peoples of other countries in doing all in their power to achieve this end.

The following telegram was received on August 27, 1939, from the chief of the government of Italy, Signor Mussolini, by the Prime Minister of Canada:

In reply to your message, I wish to assure you that I shall leave untried no effort to safeguard the peace of the world—a lasting peace, that is to say, a just peace.

The reply from the President of the Polish Republic, delivered to the Prime Minister of Canada by the Consul General for Poland on August 29, 1939, was as follows:

The government of Poland appreciate the efforts of the Prime Minister of Canada for maintaining of the peace and is sure that the Canadian government has no doubts as to the fact that it is not the Government of Poland who makes the aggressive demands and provokes the international crisis.

On August 28, 1939, the Consul General of Germany in Ottawa informed the Prime Minister of Canada that the latter's message of the 25th of August, 1939, had been delivered, and on the day following called again to say that the German Chancellor wished the Prime Minister to know that his communication had been received personally by him.

Now I come to two further statements which were issued and which have an important bearing on the position in which we are placed at the moment. On Friday the first of this month I gave out the following statement:

It is now apparent that the efforts which have been made to preserve the peace of Europe are likely to prove of no avail. In spite of these efforts hostilities have begun between Germany and Poland which threaten the peace of the world. The cabinet met at nine o'clock this morning, and in accordance with the intimation given some days ago decided to have parliament summoned forthwith. A proclamation has been issued summoning parliament to meet on Thursday next, the seventh instant. In the event of the United Kingdom becoming engaged in war in the effort to resist aggression—

Here may I pause to point out that this statement was made before Britain was actu-

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

ally at war; and may I add the further statement, that such action as this government is taking to-day it is taking in the name of Canada as a nation possessing in its own right all the powers and authority of a nation in the fullest sense. The action we are taking to-day, and such further action as this parliament may authorize, are being and will be taken by this country voluntarily, not because of any colonial or inferior status vis-à-vis Great Britain, but because of an equality of status. We are a nation in the fullest sense, a member of the British commonwealth of nations, sharing like freedom with Britain herself, a freedom which we believe we must all combine to save.

Let me repeat:

In the event of the United Kingdom becoming engaged in war in the effort to resist aggression, the government of Canada have unanimously decided, as soon as parliament meets, to seek its authority for effective cooperation by Canada at the side of Britain.

We did not decide we would have to go into war willy-nilly; we decided that the policy as therein set forth was what we believed the Canadian people wished to have given effect; and we have summoned parliament to express here, as representing the Canadian people, its will and its wish in the matter of this country entering this war voluntarily and of its own decision and right.

Meanwhile necessary measures will continue to be taken for the defence of Canada. Consultations with the United Kingdom will be continued. In the light of all the information at its disposal, the government will recommend to parliament the measures which it believes to be most effective for cooperation and defence.

The government has provided for the immediate issue of a proclamation under the War Measures Act in view of the existence of a state of apprehended war. The militia of Canada which a few days was called for voluntary service under section 63 of the Militia Act has, under section 64 of the same act, been placed on active service. The naval services and the air force have also been placed on active service.

I also added:

The people of Canada will, I am sure, face this grave situation with calm and confidence and, above all else, in a spirit which will serve to preserve the unity of our country and the maintenance of its freedom.

Now I come to the statement which I made on the afternoon of Sunday, September 3, and which I am told was broadcast not only throughout this dominion but to various countries throughout the world. That is the statement which was referred to by my hon. friend the leader of the opposition (Mr. Manion) this afternoon, in which he thought I had gone a little further than his excellency had gone in the words which I asked him to