

war be inhibited from any criticism, even though wrong were to be rampant under our eyes. I have not so read parliamentary history. If the War with Germany had been wrong in principle, if it had been causeless or purposeless, if it had been without justification, we would have been ready to so express our opinion.

The Attitude of the Liberal Party and Why

For that course there are abundant precedents. There is the precedent of Charles James Fox, who in 1800 severely blamed William Pitt for rejecting the peace overtures of Bonaparte. There is the precedent in almost our own day of John Bright and Richard Cobden criticising and condemning the war of the Crimea, representing it as useless if not criminal—a judgment which, by the way, has been pronounced by history to have been absolutely correct. (Applause.) Here the case is different. We were of the opinion that Great Britain was supremely in the right; that she was engaged in a war the most sacred that she has ever waged. Being of that opinion, we did not hesitate to give to the Government our adherence when it proposed that Canada should bear her share in the War. To that course we have been absolutely true. (Prolonged applause.)

Kept Truce under Provocation

“We went further: Not only did we give our support to the Government, but we thought it would be more in accordance with the fitness of things that we should refrain even from discussing those domestic problems which always divide a free people.

No Party Literature

“In so far as I had command of my party, I gave directions that no literature coming from a source which I could control should be of a party character. That injunction has been reasonably well fulfilled, and it has been fulfilled under great provocation, because, as a matter of fact—as was stated the other day by my hon. friend the member for South Renfrew (Mr. Graham)—every week from the official bureau of the Conservative party torrents of the most controversial kind of literature have been issued. (Cheers.) It came to such a point that in the month of December one of my friends brought me a whole batch of such literature and asked me with some indignation: ‘What are you going to do?’ After having looked at it, I said to my friend: ‘It seems to me that the Conservatives are more partisan than patriotic; we will show them that we are more patriotic than partisan, and we will not change our course.’ We did not change our course. (Prolonged cheers.)