

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS BULLETIN

April-June, 1940

(A) HIS MAJESTY THE KING

1. TEXT OF RADIO ADDRESS OF HIS MAJESTY, EMPIRE DAY, *THE 24th OF MAY*

One year ago to-day I spoke to the peoples of the Empire from Winnipeg in the heart of Canada. We were at peace.

On that Empire Day I spoke of the ideals of freedom, justice and peace upon which our Commonwealth of free peoples is founded. Clouds were gathering, but I held fast to the hope that those ideals might yet achieve fuller and richer development without suffering the grievous onslaught of war.

But it was not to be. The evil which we strove unceasingly and with all honesty of purpose to avert fell upon us. In this our conscience is clear. For there is now revealed without possibility of mistake a long-planned scheme to subjugate by force the nations of the world against which all our efforts for peace were doomed to break.

The decisive struggle is now upon us. I am going to speak plainly to you, for in this hour of trial I know that you would not have me do otherwise.

Let no one be mistaken; it is no mere territorial conquest that our enemies are seeking. It is the overthrow, complete and final, of this empire and of everything for which it stands, and after that the conquest of the world. And if their will prevails they will bring to its accomplishment all the hatred and cruelty which they have already displayed. It was not easy for us to believe that designs so evil could find a place in the human mind.

But the time for doubt is long past. To all of us in this empire, to all men of vision and good-will throughout the world, the issue is now plain: it is the issue of life or death for us all. Defeat will not mean some brief eclipse from which we shall emerge with strength renewed—it will mean destruction of our world as we have known it and the descent of darkness upon its ruins.

I speak to you to-day with a new vision of this empire before my eyes. Now that it has come into conflict and sharp comparison with the evil system which is attempting its destruction, its full significance appears in a brighter and more certain light. There is a word which our enemies use against us—imperialism. By it they mean the spirit of domination and the lust of conquest. We free peoples of the empire cast that word back in their teeth. It is they who have these evil aspirations. Our one