

the words of the leaders of the two major parties, and also with the words of my hon. friend, the leader of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (Mr. Woodsworth).

On motion of Mr. Mackenzie King the house adjourned at 4.10 p.m.

Friday, September 8, 1939

The house met at three o'clock.

PETITION

OPPOSITION TO PARTICIPATION BY CANADA IN ANY EXTRA-TERRITORIAL WAR

Mr. MAXIME RAYMOND (Beauharnois-Laprairie): I desire to lay on the table a petition signed by thousands of citizens against participation by Canada in any extra-territorial war.

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S SPEECH

ADDRESS IN REPLY, MOVED BY MR. H. S. HAMILTON AND SECONDED BY MR. J. A. BLANCHETTE

The house proceeded to the consideration of the speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor General at the opening of the session.

Mr. H. S. HAMILTON (Algoma West) moved:

That the following address be presented to His Excellency the Governor General, to offer the humble thanks of this house to His Excellency for the gracious speech which he has been pleased to make to both houses of parliament, namely,—

To His Excellency the Right Honourable Baron Tweedsmuir of Elsfield, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order, Member of the Order of the Companions of Honour, Governor General and Commander in Chief of the Dominion of Canada.

May it Please Your Excellency:

We, His Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the House of Commons of Canada, in parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Excellency for the gracious speech which Your Excellency has addressed to both houses of parliament.

He said: The tragic conditions in Europe at this time, under the shadow of which this house meets, and which are of such grave significance to Canada, suggest that talk should be as brief as possible, and action as prompt and vigorous as possible. I suggest that we refute by our action the criticisms often levelled at democracies, that they are good as debating societies but incapable of vigorous action. I could not help thinking yesterday, as I saw the members assembling from all parts of Canada, fresh from contact

[Mr. Blackmore.]

with the people throughout this dominion, knowing their thoughts, knowing their wishes and their hopes, that had such a parliament been assembled in Germany before any war action was taken a war would not be raging in Europe to-day.

I believe that all the people in the world detest war and crave for peace. The voice of the people in Germany has been silenced. It is for us to see that never in Canada shall the voice of our people be silenced. At this time, as a free member of a free parliament of which I am to-day particularly conscious and particularly proud, I conceive it to be my duty not to make an eloquent or platitudinous speech but rather, as a Canadian, to say plainly and freely what I think.

Canada is not concerned to-day how we speak, but Canada is interested in what we say. His Excellency's address reads in part as follows:

You have been summoned at the earliest moment in order that the government may seek authority for the measures necessary for the defence of Canada, and for cooperation in the determined effort which is being made to resist further aggression. . . .

I think, sir, that the keynote of the speech is contained in the words, "that the government may seek authority for measures necessary for the defence of Canada and for cooperation in the determined effort which is being made to resist further aggression."

May I at once express my thanks to the government for implementing a pledge long since given to the people of Canada that parliament would be consulted before Canada was committed to war. In doing that, as was to be expected, they have kept faith with the Canadian people, and for the moment I would express several tributes of appreciation with respect to two or three matters. Under the pressure which we know was exerted upon the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) to declare this and that as to Canada's attitude under certain hypothetical conditions, he declined to do so. In my opinion, and I merely record it, it was sound judgment on his part so to do. I express appreciation of the fact also that he did not prematurely convene parliament and thus precipitate possibly a debate that would result in misunderstandings and misrepresentations arising again out of a discussion of hypothetical conditions that might exist, which misunderstandings and misrepresentations might easily be used throughout the world for purposes of propaganda. To have allowed that to happen would have been a disservice to the greatest national asset we have, namely, the unity of the Dominion of Canada. In passing, may I pay my respects to the wisdom of the Prime Minister in declin-