

I can only say that his Majesty's Government has taken into grave consideration the information which has just been received. I make no further comment. (Cheers.)

THE SPEECHES OF SIR ROBERT BORDEN AND SIR WILFRID LAURIER IN PARLIAMENT WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19, 1914

In moving the address in reply to the speech from the Throne, Mr. Sutherland struck at once the right note by saying that the present was a time for united action and not for words. He emphasized the long endeavors of Great Britain to avert the war by all means consistent with national honor and treaty obligations. The German-speaking citizens of Canada, he said, were not in sympathy with the military-mad aspirations of a German autocrat.

Mr. Lesperance, seconding the address, declared that all party differences should be laid aside in face of the national danger. He congratulated the Liberal leader on the patriotic stand he had taken in giving the lead in this connection.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier:—

In an opening sentence Sir Wilfrid extended his felicitations to the mover and seconder. He had but one criticism or suggestion to offer: he would urge the elimination of all unnecessary formality impeding the way to immediate action.

"The gravity of the event under which we are now assembled," said he, "would seem to make it advisable, would even seem to make it incumbent upon us to disregard the formalities and conventionalities which, in ordinary times, the rules of the House, whether written or unwritten, enjoin as a barrier, a wise safeguard, against precipitate action, and which may, perhaps, on this occasion, either debar us or impede us in consideration of the question with which we have to deal.

"This session has been called for the purpose of giving the authority of Parliament and the sanction of law to such measures as have already been taken, and any further measures that may be needed, to insure the defence of this country, and to give what aid may be in our power to the mother country in the stupendous struggle which now confronts us. Speaking for those who sit around me, speaking for the wide constituency which we represent in this House, I hasten to say that to all these measures we are prepared to give an immediate assent. (Cheers.)

"If in what has been done, or in what remains to be done, there may be anything which, in our judgment, should not be done or should be differently done, we raise no question, we take no exception, we offer no criticism, and shall offer no criticism, so long as there is danger at the front. **It is our duty, more pressing upon us than all other duty, at once, on this first day of debate in the Canadian Parliament, to let Great Britain know, to let the friends and the foes of Great Britain know, that there is in Canada but one mind and one heart, and that all Canadians stand behind the mother country, conscious and proud that she did not engage in war from any selfish motive, for any purpose of aggrandizement, but that she has engaged in war to maintain untarnished, the honor of her name; to fulfill her obligations to her allies, to maintain her treaty obligations, and to save civilization from the unbridled lust of conquest and power.** (Renewed cheering.)

"We are British subjects, and to-day we are face to face with the consequences which are involved in that proud fact. Long we have enjoyed the benefits of our British citizenship; to-day it is our duty and our privilege to accept its responsibilities, yes, and its sacrifices.

"We have long said that when Great Britain was at war we were at war; to-day we realize that Great Britain is at war and that Canada is at war also. Our territory is liable to attack and to invasion. So far as invasion is concerned, I do not see that there is any cause for apprehension, for it seems to me obvious that neither Austria nor Germany, our foes in this war, can command any force able to carry out an attack so far from their base. But no one pretends that our maritime cities, either on the Pacific or on the Atlantic, are free from the assault of an audacious corsair, who, descending suddenly upon our shores, might subject us to indignity and insult, and decamp with his booty before punishment could reach him.

"This is not a mere unfounded dread of danger, this is no mere illusion; it is a real and, indeed, approximate danger, since it is a matter of notoriety that both on the Pacific and the Atlantic there are German cruisers whose mission is to inflict all the injury they can upon our commerce, and even make descent upon our cities should they find our harbors unguarded. We are aware that the Government has already taken measures, and very properly so, to guard against this danger. We know that one of our battleships on the Pacific has been seeking the enemy, to protect our commerce and our cities, and if she has not yet engaged the enemy it is because the enemy has eluded her pursuit.

"We have had another and more striking evidence that when Great Britain is at war we are at war, in this, that our commerce has been paralyzed, perhaps the expression would not be too strong if I were to say that it has been to some extent dislocated. From the day when war was declared, nay, from the day when the possibility of war was first mooted, our shipping to Great Britain and to Europe was interrupted. Ships there were lying at the docks fully loaded and ready to take to sea, but unable to take to sea because of the fact that when Britain is at war Canadian property on the high seas is liable to capture, and therefore the ships had to remain in port so long as precautions had not been taken to clear the way and to insure their safe passage across the ocean. What measures have been taken in regard to that we have not yet been informed, but I have no doubt that we shall have that information in due time.

"The correspondence brought down yesterday, however, has informed us that the Canadian Government has already taken steps to send a contingent of twenty thousand men or thereabouts to take their place in the firing line. Let me say that upon this occasion I owe it to the House and to myself to speak with absolute frankness and candor. This is a subject which has often been an occasion of debate in this House. I have always said, and I repeat on this occasion, that there is but one mind and one heart in Canada. In other times we may hold different views as to the methods by which we are to serve our country and our Empire. More than once I have declared that if Britain were ever in danger, nay, not in danger, but if she were ever in such a contest as would put her strength to the test, it would be the duty of Canada to assist her to the utmost of her ability.