

mooted respecting the status of any Canadian force serving abroad, as under section sixty-nine of Canadian Militia Act the active militia can only be placed on active service beyond Canada for the defence thereof. It has been suggested that regiments might enlist as Imperial troops for stated period, Canadian Government undertaking to make all necessary financial provision for their equipment, pay and maintenance. This proposal has not yet been maturely considered here and my advisers would be glad to have views of Imperial Government thereon.

The answer which we received and which was not made public at the time, as war had not yet broken out, was on the 3rd of August, and it is as follows:

With reference to your cypher telegram 2nd Aug., please inform your ministers that their patriotic readiness to render every aid is deeply appreciated by His Majesty's Government, but they would prefer postponing detailed observations on the suggestion put forward, pending further developments. As soon as situation appears to call for further measures I will telegraph you again.

That telegram is significant because it shows that then, on the 3rd of August, the Imperial Government not only were using every endeavour to preserve peace, but had hopes that peace might be preserved. Therefore they made their answer to us in the guarded language which I have just quoted.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN: Is that signed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: That is signed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Harcourt. All these communications go from His Royal Highness to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and the replies are received in the same way.

On the 4th day of August they sent us the following further telegram with regard to the same matter:

Though there seems to be no immediate necessity for any request on our part for an expeditionary force from Canada, I think, in view of their generous offer, your ministers would be wise to take all legislative and other steps by which they would be enabled without delay to provide such a force in case it should be required later.

On the 6th day of August they sent us the following despatch:

With reference to my telegram of August 4, His Majesty's Government gratefully accept offer of your ministers to send expeditionary force to this country, and would be glad if it could be despatched as soon as possible. Suggested composition follows.

The suggested composition which followed later was, as stated by my right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition, to whom I have communicated several of these des-

patches in the meantime, that we should send forward a division, comprising about 22,500 men.

On the 1st day of August I also sent through His Royal Highness the Governor General, the following telegram:

My advisers, while expressing their most earnest hope that peaceful solution of existing international difficulties may be achieved and their strong desire to co-operate in every possible way for that purpose, wish me to convey to His Majesty's Government the firm assurance that, if unhappily war should ensue, the Canadian people will be united in a common resolve to put forth every effort and to make every sacrifice necessary to ensure the integrity and maintain the honour of our Empire.

To which on the 2nd day of August the following reply was received:

With reference to your telegram 1st August, His Majesty's Government gratefully welcome the assurance of your Government that in the present crisis they may rely on whole-hearted co-operation of the people of Canada.

I spoke in that regard of the united spirit and action of the people of Canada, and subsequent events have shown that I was not in any wise mistaken in placing that estimate upon the sentiment of the Canadian people. The men of Canada who are going to the front are going as free men by voluntary enlistment—as free men in a free country. They are coming forward voluntarily for the purpose of serving this Dominion and this Empire in a time of peril. Already I am informed by the Minister of Militia that thousands more than will be required have volunteered to go. I desire to express my absolute concurrence in the view put forward by the hon. member for South Oxford (Mr. Sutherland) in his eloquent address, namely, that it is the duty of the people of Canada, and of the Government of Canada too, so far as may be necessary, to make all suitable provision for the families and children of those who are going to the front. We are giving to our country and our Empire at this time of our best, and we are proud to do it; but we must not forget our duty to those who are left behind. Neither the people of Canada nor the Government of Canada will ever for one moment forget that duty.

There has also been made public a telegram which we despatched to the mother country with regard to a provision which we thought might be very welcome, not only for the material assistance which it would afford, but as a reminder to the mother country that the people of the Dominions were with them in every sense, and that this