

The proclamation has since been published in a special issue of the *Canada Gazette*.

In taking the prompt action we did, my colleagues and I had much in mind the assurances publicly given by Mr. Churchill to the United States on behalf of Great Britain. The first of these assurances broadcast on August 24th, at a time I myself was Mr. Churchill's guest, was to the effect that if negotiations between Japan and the United States should fail, the United Kingdom would of course range itself unhesitatingly at the side of the United States. This guarantee of Britain's support Mr. Churchill repeated in another world broadcast on November 10th. This time he said that if Japan made war against the United States, Britain would declare war within the hour.

When five days later, Canadian forces landed at Hong Kong, I made the statement that defence against aggression, actual or threatened, in any part of the world, was today a part of the defence of every country which still enjoyed freedom. I added that it was in accordance with that view that the Canadian Government deemed it advisable to associate Canadian troops with the forces of other parts of the British Commonwealth stationed in the Orient. The Cabinet was aware last night that, as Japanese action progressed, our troops might at any moment be under fire. In these circumstances, it appeared to my colleagues and myself that it was the duty of the Government to act with all possible speed and decision.

Having regard to the momentous character of the decision, my first thought was to ~~summon~~ Parliament immediately, in order to associate both Houses with the declaration of a state of war between Canada and Japan. I had recently stated in Parliament that Canada's position with respect to co-operation between Britain and the United States in the Far East was well known. The presence of Canadian troops in Hong Kong had been greeted with widespread approval throughout the country. In the mind of the Government there was no doubt that Parliament would approve the Government's decision. To bring Members of Parliament together from all parts of Canada would require almost a week. In the circumstances, it was felt that formal approval might await the reassembling of Parliament in January. I should mention perhaps that during the afternoon, I communicated by telephone with Mr. Hanson, the Leader of the Opposition, with Mr. Coldwell and Mr. Blackmore, the leaders of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation and Social Credit groups in the House of Commons, to give them such information as the Government had received, and to inform them of the government's intention to advise His Majesty the King to issue a proclamation declaring the existence of a state of war between Canada and Japan, as from December 7th.

Sub-head:
Parliament
approval
assured

ask that

be summoned

late

long distance