

# Canada at War

## SPEECHES

DELIVERED BY

*Rt. Hon.*

*Sir Robert Laird Borden*

K.C., P.C., G.C.M.G.

BEFORE

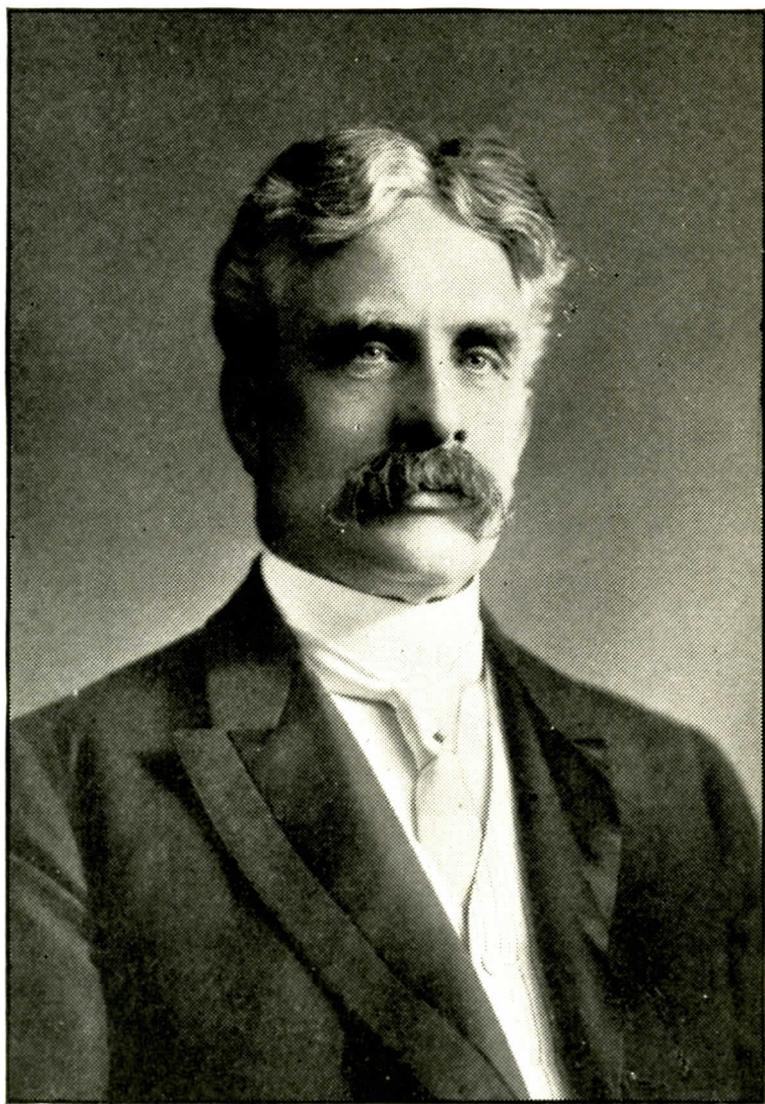
CANADIAN CLUBS

TORONTO :: MONTREAL

HALIFAX :: WINNIPEG

♦♦♦

DECEMBER 1914



SIR ROBERT LAIRD BORDEN, K.C., P.C., G.C.M.G.

## *A Speech before the Canadian and Empire Clubs at Toronto, December 5 1914*

Today there is but one thought in our hearts and it is fitting that I should speak to you of the appalling struggle which has been forced upon our Empire. I say forced upon us; because I am convinced that no nation ever desired peace more sincerely than the nations which compose the British Empire; that no statesmen ever wrought more earnestly to avoid war than did the statesmen of Great Britain in the weeks which immediately preceded the conflict.

There is not time nor is it necessary that I should dwell upon the occurrences which determined the issue. The great events which brought about the establishment and consolidation of the German Empire under Prussian domination are well known to you. Bismarck foreshadowed in a famous phrase the policy of the future. "The great questions are to be settled," he said, in 1862, "not by speeches and majority resolutions, but by blood and iron." Then came in quick succession the war against Denmark in 1864, the downfall of Austria in 1866 and the overthrow of France in 1870. The policy of blood and iron seemed to consummate the realization of that which has been the dream of Germany for centuries. Germany became an Empire; the King of Prussia became its Emperor. The military spirit of Prussia dominated German thought and German ideals. The intoxication of victory, aided by a propaganda preached to every child and every young man by the foremost thinkers of Germany, imposed on its people an ideal and an ambition which included the dominance of Europe and indeed of the world.

The British people have only recently come to realize the astonishing teaching to which the German people have listened for the last half century. Among many others, Treitschke, a great professor of history, whose influence upon the young men of Germany cannot be over-estimated, and Bernhardt, his disciple, have preached the religion of valour and of might. War has been glorified as a solemn duty for the cause of national development. They proclaimed that the State is not only justified but bound to put aside all obligations and to disregard all treaties in so far as they

may conflict with its highest interest. "War," said Bernhardt, "is in itself a good thing. It is a biological necessity of the first importance \* \* \* \* War is the greatest factor in the furtherance of culture and power \* \* \* \* Efforts to secure peace are extraordinarily detrimental as soon as they influence politics \* \* \* \* Efforts directed toward the abolition of war are not only foolish but absolutely immoral and must be stigmatized as unworthy of the human race \* \* \* \* Courts of arbitration are a pernicious delusion. The whole idea represents a presumptuous encroachment on natural laws of development which can only lead to the most disastrous consequences for humanity generally \* \* \* \* The maintenance of peace never can be or may be the goal of a policy \* \* \* \* Efforts for peace would, if they attained their goal, lead to degeneration \* \* \* \* Huge armaments are in themselves desirable. They are the most necessary precondition of our national health."

The profound influence of this teaching upon the German people may be realized from their unquestioning support of the enormous increase in their military and naval forces. Beyond question, Germany is the greatest military power in the world. Without any such need as makes a great fleet imperatively necessary to ensure the safety and even the existence of the British Empire, she has built up in ships, personnel, dockyards and all other essentials, a powerful navy designed to challenge conclusions with that of Great Britain. What ambitions would not be open to Germany, what tribute could she not exact, if, dominating Europe with her army, she could wage a successful naval campaign against Britain!

Within the past ten years the peace of Europe has been threatened by Germany on no less than three occasions. In 1905 France at her dictation was obliged to dismiss her Foreign Minister. In 1909 Germany shook her mailed fist and compelled Russia to bow to her will. In 1911, as the history of the Agadir incident recalls, she again attempted to coerce and humiliate France and the situation was saved only by the interposition of Great Britain. Germany receded on that occasion from her first pretensions, but only to abide her time. Her time, as she thought, had come in July, 1914.

The military autocracy of Germany have taught their people for more than twenty years that the British Empire stood chiefly in the path of German expansion and that war was inevitable. No one could predict the exact occasion which would be seized, but no one could doubt the intention of the Prussian militarists. There was the lesson of Denmark and Austria and France. In the end

the storm broke suddenly and the country was confronted with responsibilities greater than those which it had ever faced. The situation demanded action; it demanded immediate and unhesitating action beyond the authorization of the law as it then stood; it was impossible for the Government to wait; and by Order-in-Council we promulgated necessary measures in advance of the meeting of Parliament. The people of Canada loyally acquiesced in these measures and our course has been ratified by the necessary legislative sanction.

On the first of August I sent to the British Government a secret telegram announcing Canada's desire to send an expeditionary force if war should ensue. The offer was not accepted until the 6th of August, but in the meantime steps in anticipation were taken and the raising and equipment of troops for such a force were authorized. On the 7th August, the suggested composition of the force was received from the British authorities, and was immediately sanctioned by Order-in-Council. Recruiting in the meantime had already commenced, and on the 6th August the preparation of the Valcartier Camp was begun. I visited that Camp four weeks from the day on which work commenced, and I am proud that we possess in Canada the ability to achieve within so limited a period all that was accomplished within that month. A rifle range comprising a line of 1,500 targets and extending more than three and a half miles was completed within about ten days. A complete water supply with necessary piping, pumps, tanks and chlorinating plant, with about 200 taps fitted to ablution tables and seventy-five shower baths, was constructed. An electric light, power and telephone system was installed. Streets were constructed; buildings and tents erected and an effective sewerage system comprising over 28,000 feet of drain pipe was completed. Railway sidings with necessary loading platforms were constructed. Woods were cleared and elaborate sanitary arrangements prepared. Six large buildings for ordnance stores and for the Army Service Corps, buildings for medical stores, for pay and transport offices, hospital stables for sick horses, fumigating and other buildings were constructed and made ready for use within the same period. Thirty-five thousand men were assembled and put through a most systematic course of training in all branches of the service. Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery, Engineers, Army Service Corps, Army Medical Corps, Signallers and Ammunition columns were organized and all were trained in their respective duties. Sixteen thousand men were trained daily in musketry. The clothing and equipment, the transport and supply for 35,000 men were a heavy undertaking, especially in the urgency of haste. It is difficult for those

who did not see the camp and who have not studied all that has been accomplished to realize the tremendous demands made upon the organizing ability of the Canadian people to accomplish all this. I venture the assertion that the organization and arrangements of Valcartier Camp have not been excelled in any part of our Empire since the commencement of this war. It is unnecessary to describe in detail all the equipment, arms, accoutrements and other necessaries furnished. To equip the force sent forward and to make some provision for future contingents 290,000 pairs of boots and shoes have been provided; 100,000 forage caps, 90,000 great coats, 240,000 jackets and sweaters of various types, 235,000 pairs of trousers, 70,000 rifles, 70,000 bayonets, 80,000 oil bottles, 70,000 water bottles, 95,000 sets of valise equipment, and so on in like proportion over a list of sixty-six different articles. With the first expeditionary force we sent to Great Britain 21 thirteen-pounder quick-firing guns, 96 eighteen-pounder quick-firing guns, 10 breach-loading sixty-pounder guns, a large number of machine guns, motor lorries, transport waggons and vast quantities of ammunition. The force was ready for embarkation within six weeks from the outbreak of war and could have been then despatched if arrangements for escort had been immediately possible. You perhaps do not realize how great an undertaking it was for a non-military country to assemble, organize, train, equip and despatch so large a force within that brief period. It is, I believe, the largest military force that ever crossed the Atlantic at one time. In the great Armada, which threatened the shores of Great Britain three centuries ago, there were less than 20,000 soldiers. The force which we have sent across the Atlantic is nearly fifty per cent greater than the total number of British troops under Wellington's command at Waterloo.

It would be not only useless, but unjust and cruel as well, to send untrained men to the front against highly-trained and seasoned troops. They must also be hardened by exercise in the duties of a soldier's life until their physical condition will enable them to endure the hardships of active service. Thus our troops are receiving in Great Britain the same tests of training and of exercise which are prescribed for the volunteer army of the Mother Country. That they will acquit themselves worthily no one can doubt who saw them at Valcartier. In physique, in spirit, in courage, and in all qualities that are necessary for the soldier, they will be found second to none.

If the training of a soldier is important, the training, the skill and the experience of the men who command them are even more essential and imperative. The officers of the Canadian Militia

have all the necessary qualities that could be desired. They have given ungrudgingly of their time and their energy to fit themselves as far as possible for the duties of active service. But for them even more than for the men, the training and experience at Valcartier and on Salisbury Plain are not only invaluable but absolutely essential before they lead their men into action. In this grim struggle our forces will face the most highly organized military machine in the world.

I have spoken of what Canada has done. The call of duty has not fallen upon unheeding ears in this country. East and West, every province and practically every community has responded with an ardour and a spirit which emphasize the strength of the ties that bind together the Dominions of this Empire. When the first contingent sailed from Canada, we immediately announced that another would follow. During the delay which ensued before the War Office in the pressure of multitudinous affairs could suggest its composition, it was announced that in addition to the force which had gone abroad and in addition to the 8,000 men engaged in garrison and outpost duty, we would enlist and train 30,000 men; and that from these a second contingent would be despatched as soon as the necessary arms and equipment could be provided and as soon as the War Office would be prepared to receive them. The number under training has recently been increased to 50,000 men; and it is arranged that as soon as each contingent goes forward a corresponding number of men will be enlisted to take its place. This will proceed regularly and continuously until peace is achieved or until we are satisfied that no more men are needed. Our forces under arms in Canada and abroad will soon exceed 100,000 men. That number has frequently been mentioned in the press. In this war which we are waging against the most powerful military organization the world ever knew, I prefer to name no figure. If the preservation of our Empire demands twice or thrice that number, we shall ask for them, and I know that Canada will answer the call. But remember that men cannot be sent forward more rapidly than the British authorities are prepared to receive them and to undertake their final training. Moreover, we have not in Canada, as in countries organized on a military basis, great stores of equipment, arms, accoutrements, ammunition and guns. These must be provided, and they are being provided with all possible expedition. Both here and in Great Britain these requisites are lacking upon the tremendous scale which is now necessary. Without thorough training, without arms, equipment and all the essentials of warlike preparation, men sent into this awful maelstrom of war are but an incubus and danger rather than an aid.

There can be but one issue to this war, but do not expect that

it will be a speedy issue. I have reason to know that the results hitherto attained have been all that were anticipated by the Allies; but, so far as can be foreseen, there is a long struggle before us.

The justice of the Allies' cause is generally understood and recognized among our kinsmen in the great neighbouring nation, and we are proud of their sympathy. A representative of the German Government in that country has recently thought it necessary to discuss the Monroe Doctrine as it may affect Canada. That doctrine, as you know, does not embody any principle of international law, but is a policy proclaimed nearly one hundred years ago by the Government of the United States. For the reason that it is a policy of the United States that country alone has the right to determine its scope and its limitations. As the policy of a great friendly nation, the Monroe Doctrine is entitled to every respect; but Canada does not seek shelter behind it in this war. The people of this Dominion are eager and determined to take their part in a struggle which involves the destiny of their Empire and indeed its very existence. They are quite prepared and willing to assume all responsibilities which that action involves, and they have a reasonable confidence in Canada's ability to defend her territory.

Four months of war have elapsed and Canada emerges triumphant from this great test of her unity, her patriotism and her national spirit. It has brought together in co-operation and mutual helpfulness divergent interests, differing beliefs and dissonant ideals. Every province, every city, town and village, and indeed every community, has contributed its quota to the magnificent Patriotic Fund, which has been raised to make just provision for those dependent upon the men who have gone to the front. Let us not forget a tribute to the patriotism and generosity of our citizens of German descent, who, in proportion to their numbers and their means, have made so splendid a contribution to that fund. The women of Canada have provided a great hospital, and all Canada is grateful for their untiring activities in the many missions of mercy which they have undertaken. From the Dominion, from every province, from cities and towns, from associations of farmers, from the great labour interests of the country and from individuals, aid has come in a generous stream; and you will permit me to say that nowhere in the Dominion has the spirit of patriotism made itself more manifest in generous and effective aid for all purposes than in your own city.

And this war has demonstrated the essential unity of the Empire. When the book is closed and the story has been told, we shall at least owe that to the Kaiser. It was to fall asunder as soon as he girded on his shining armour. But, instead, it has

become tense with unity and instinct with life and action. Our decadent race was to flee in terror before his victorious troops; but the plains of Belgium and France tell no story of decadence. The history of British arms contains no annals more glorious. It is our hope and our confidence that Canada's record will not be less worthy.

In the bitterness of this struggle let us not forget that the world owes much to German thought, endeavour and achievement in science, literature, the arts and every other sphere of useful human activity. I do not doubt that the German people, misled as to the supposed designs of Great Britain, impressed for the time being by the Prussian military spirit, and not truly comprehending the real causes of the conflict, are behind their Government in this war. Nevertheless, it is in truth a war waged against the military oligarchy which controls the government of Germany. The defeat of that militarist autocracy means much for the world, but it means even more for Germany herself. Freed from its domination and inspired by truer ideals, the German people will attain a higher national greatness than before.

Canada is united in the strong conviction that our cause is just and in an unflinching determination to make it triumphant. This appalling conflict was not of Britain's seeking. Having entered upon it there is but one duty, to stand firmly united in an inflexible resolve to force it to a victorious and honourable conclusion. Reverses may come, but they must only inspire us with a deeper courage and greater determination. Our fortitude and our endurance must equal all demands that the future shall make upon us. All that our fathers fought for and achieved; all that we have inherited and accomplished, our institutions and liberties, our destiny as a nation, the existence of our Empire, all are at stake in this contest. The resolution, the determination, the self-reliance which never failed Canada in the stress and trials of the past will assuredly not fail her now.

## *A Speech before the Canadian Club at Montreal December 7, 1914*

I speak of that which is uppermost in the thoughts of all men, the pending struggle which touches the destiny of more than half the world. Much has been said and written as to the direct causes which involved our Empire in this conflict. The utmost devotion and earnestness characterized the efforts of Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey, first to prevent war and next to narrow the conflict. The view has been expressed that an earlier declaration of Great Britain's determination would possibly have saved the situation. Those who are familiar with the later phases of constitutional government in Great Britain understand thoroughly that the British Government could have taken no other course than that which they did adopt. There was a day when the Crown of Great Britain made war without consulting Parliament or the people. A later day came when the King made war only upon the advice and with the consent of his ministers responsible to the people for the advice which they gave. But there came, I think, a still later day when neither the Crown nor Ministers could make war without knowing that the cause was just and that public opinion supported them. It is not necessary to discuss the understanding with France. The tremendous growth of navies throughout the world, and especially of the German Navy, apparently made it essential in these later years that an *entente* or understanding with other powers should be established to the end that the safety of our ocean pathways might not be imperilled. It would appear that Great Britain was to safeguard the interests of France upon the ocean at certain vital points, as our interests were safeguarded by the French Navy in the Mediterranean. Public opinion in Great Britain halted and was indeed divided as to the just measure of our responsibilities; but the great voice of the nation certainly desired and intended that they should be honourably and effectively discharged, not only in the letter, but in the spirit. Every consideration was, however, swept aside, all doubt was dissipated, and public opinion throughout the Empire was rendered practically unanimous by the action of Germany herself. All the great powers of Europe had guaranteed the neutrality of Belgium by solemn treaty, first in 1832 and afterwards in 1839. In 1870 Great Britain had insisted that such neutrality should be respected by Germany

and by France and had bound herself by treaty to attack whichever nation should violate it. She took the same stand in 1914. France thereupon pledged herself to observe and respect the neutrality of Belgium. The same pledge was demanded of Germany; and Germany's contemptuous answer was the invasion of Belgian territory.

German apologists have the temerity to declare that under the circumstances it was the duty of Belgium to permit without hindrance the peaceful passage of German armies through her territory for the purpose of attacking France. Under the law of nations, as established by The Hague Peace Conference in 1907, a neutral power cannot allow any belligerent to move across its territory troops or convoys either of munitions of war or supplies. Belgium, by permitting the course which Germany demanded, would herself have committed an act of war against France. Imagine for one moment the situation: German armies pass through Belgian territory to attack France without hindrance from Belgium; they emerge upon French territory and are attacked and perhaps driven back; they take refuge in Belgian territory and emerge again. The wild unreason of suggesting that Belgium could permit this and maintain the status of a neutral and independent state will not bear and does not merit discussion.

An American citizen who had received one of the innumerable German pamphlets that are being circulated in the United States, wrote back in answer, "If you desire to justify your cause, tell me first of all why you are in Belgium and what you are doing there."

The habit of German thought toward problems of government is entirely different from and indeed antagonistic to the conception which is entertained in English-speaking countries. They theorize upon the weakness of a government, such as ours, subject through responsible ministers to the will of Parliament and the control of the people. The Emperor's advisers are selected by himself and are responsible to him alone. It is the German ideal that the individual exists for the State and not the State for the individual. They sincerely believe that the German ideal is the true one and that the systems of democratic government which prevail in English-speaking countries are of a temporary and evanescent type. Their great modern historian has declared that just as the greatness of Germany is to be found in the governance of Germany by Prussia so the greatness and good of the world is to be found in the predominance there of German culture and of the German mind,—in a word, of the German character.

The German colonies are state undertakings. British colonies and dominions have been built up throughout the world rather by the free and adventurous spirit of our race than by any state effort. Indeed, in some instances they have sprung into being against the will and without the encouragement or assistance of the British Government. The German colonies are governed, as Germany is governed, by the will of those who control the State and not by the consent or will of the people. The great over-seas dominions of the British Empire have been granted, not as of grace but of right, the same privileges of representative self-government as those enjoyed by the people of the British Islands. In the one case there is the strength and unity which freedom brings; in the other case, the weakness which autocracy develops.

Among the utterances of those who have most widely influenced German public opinion during the past quarter of a century, one does not fail to discover the profound conviction that the British Empire chiefly stood in the way of German expansion and predominance and that war between the two countries was absolutely inevitable. They recognize and frankly declare that Germany must fight for and win quickly all that other nations attained in centuries of gradual development. To put it shortly, Germany requires a special place in the sun and the British Empire stands in the way. The spirit of Prussian militarism knew from the first that its ideal could not be realized without a victorious war against our Empire. That spirit spoke in Bismarck in 1862, when he said: "The great questions are to be settled by blood and iron." They believed our race to be decadent and the Empire a sham which ought to be destroyed. Denmark in 1864, Austria in 1866, France in 1870 and our Empire on that future day to which they drank.

You do not need to be told of the momentous nature of the struggle in which we are engaged. I hope that every man in Canada will realize that it challenges the continued existence of this Empire and involves the destiny of this Dominion. History records no such titanic conflict. Not for us alone, but for our Allies as well, the conflict involves the very life of nations. "We must square our account with France," said Bernhardt; "France must be so completely crushed that she can never again come across our path;" and, again, "It would be a war to the knife with France. One which would, if victorious, annihilate once and for all the French position as a great power."

"It is upon the navy that, under the good Providence of God, the wealth, prosperity and peace of these islands and of our Empire do mainly depend." So reads the statement of our dependence upon the sea as set forth in the "Articles of War"; and the

challenge of Germany to this safeguard of our Empire has been unmistakable for nearly twenty years. The German naval law of 1900 did not expressly name the British fleet, but it designated it unmistakably as that with which Germany proposed to measure her strength. The disparity of the naval risk of the two Empires must never be overlooked in considering the design. The military forces of our Empire were insignificant compared with those of Germany. The one numbered its army by millions and the other by thousands. Germany with her huge and magnificently organized army could whenever she chose invade and conquer Great Britain after a successful naval campaign in the North Sea. Great Britain possessed no such military power as would enable her unaided even to contemplate a military attack upon Germany. A decisive battle lost at sea by Germany would still have left her the greatest power in Europe. Such a battle lost at sea by Great Britain would forever ruin the United Kingdom, shatter the British Empire to its foundations and change profoundly the destiny of its component parts. The advantages which Great Britain would gain from defeating Germany were negligible; while there were practically no limits to the ambitions in which Germany might indulge or to the glowing prospects opened to her in every quarter of the globe if the British Navy were out of the way. The combination of the strongest navy with that of the strongest army would offer more magnificent prospects of power and influence than those within the grasp of any Empire of modern times.

No one can truthfully allege that the naval policy of Great Britain has been provocative. During the past nine years, at least, the British Government have manifested a deep and earnest desire to check and mitigate the rivalry in naval quarters. This desire has been manifested both by precept and by example; but the only result of the example was to stimulate Germany to greater efforts. Under the latest German programme, the fleet possessed by that power in 1920 would not be inferior to the British Navy of today. Moreover, their great fleet was not dispersed all over the world for duties of commerce protection or in the discharge of colonial responsibilities, nor were its composition and character adapted to this purpose. It was concentrated and kept concentrated in close proximity to the German and British coasts; and it was organized and designed, at every stage and in every particular, with a view to fleet action on a large scale in the North Sea or North Atlantic with the navy of some other great power. It could not have been designed for the defence of Germany against attack by another naval power. Germany has a very small coast line, most unpromising for any opportunity of naval attack, and defended by an immense frontage of fortifications crowned by enormous

batteries. The whole character of the German fleet shows that it was designed for aggressive and offensive action on the highest possible scale in the North Sea or the North Atlantic.

The German Navy has not come forth from its fortress shelter to engage the British fleet in any large action. We cannot know what designs the future may reveal; but it is an open secret that by a process of attrition, of destroying here and there a dreadnought or a cruiser, Germany hopes to undertake the contest on more equal terms. Our commerce has nevertheless been to some extent disturbed, many ships have been captured, one important cable station in the Pacific has been destroyed and in the South Pacific two ships went down after a most gallant action against great odds. With them went down four young Canadians, three from my native province and one from the adjoining Province of New Brunswick; and I pause to pay a tribute to their memory. Consider what might have been the result if many such cruisers as the "Emden", the "Königsberg" and the "Karlsruhe" had been let loose to prey upon our commerce; and remember that Great Britain's ability to keep concentrated in the North Sea the enormous naval force now gathered there is owing to conditions which could not be anticipated with certainty. The powerful French fleet in the Mediterranean and the Japanese cruisers in the Pacific have enabled Great Britain to keep the "Grand Fleet", as it is called, concentrated in the North Sea to muzzle the German Navy. Mr. Churchill has spoken of the Navy's splendid work. Realizing that all the ocean pathways throughout the world had to be protected and our commerce safeguarded in every sea, one cannot say too much in praise of the officers and men who have discharged this great duty.

The German Government has a wonderful intelligence system, and most interesting information was communicated to me two years ago as to its extensive methods of espionage in Great Britain. Apparently the German Secret Service acquired more information than its Government was able to digest. Ireland was to rise in revolt. The self-governing Dominions would stand aloof. There would be uprisings in India and the British Islands must stand alone in the day of trial. The German Government evidently believed that the British race had become decadent, that the ancient valour and fighting spirit were of the past, that the reputed strength of the Empire was a sham and that we must go down before her powerful attack because we were too selfish, too commercial, and too cowardly to justify our continued existence. Do the plains of Belgium and the hills of France tell the story of decadence? The annals of the British Army disclose no more heroic record. Have the self-governing Dominions stood aloof,

and has India risen in revolt? From every portion of this far-flung Empire has come the same answer, and it will still come until this war is brought to an honourable and triumphant conclusion. On page 137 of the English translation of General Bernhardi's book, published in 1913, I find this reference to the self-governing Dominions: "They can be completely ignored so far as concerns any European theatre of War." I venture to predict that before this war closes, unless it reaches a conclusion sooner than we can reasonably expect, the German armies will find confronting them 250,000 men from those same self-governing Dominions; and these men with the other forces of the Empire will esteem it an honour to fight side by side with valiant troops of France and of Belgium whose courage and endurance under the most deadly trials have already aroused the admiration of the world.

In the early days of the war, a letter from Sir Charles Tupper contained this pregnant sentence: "The consolidation of the British Empire is already accomplished." Step by step during the past hundred years the development of self-government has proceeded in the over-seas Dominions. The enjoyment of these powers has not weakened, but rather strengthened, the bonds which hold together the Empire. In one respect only the evolution has not attained its full development. The citizens of the self-governing Dominions do not directly participate through their ministers or through their Parliament in the councils of the Empire which determine the issues of peace and war. It would be rash to predict the method by which that great problem will be solved; but of this I am convinced that the events of this war will powerfully assist in hastening its wise solution. Let me add that the presence of a member of the Government as Acting-High Commissioner in London during the past four months has been of inestimable advantage to Canada. As a Minister of the Crown he occupies today a unique position among those who represent in London the great Dominions; and through his presence there an understanding and co-operation between the two Governments has been attained which would otherwise have been difficult, if not impossible. It is my duty and privilege to bear testimony to his splendid service to his country during these trying months.

We have in Canada many citizens who are natives of one or the other of the countries with which we are, unfortunately, at war. They have come to Canada intending to make it their home, and when war broke out they were engaged in their ordinary avocations. While so engaged and so long as they do not attempt to aid the enemy they are entitled to the protection of the law, as has been publicly proclaimed from time to time. The conduct

of these citizens, with very few exceptions, has been exemplary; and I hope it will be realized that having invited them to become citizens of this country, we owe to them, in the trying circumstances in which they are placed, the duty of fairness and consideration. The vast majority of them, breathing the freer atmosphere of this Dominion, do not especially appreciate the military system of their native land. They and their descendants will become good citizens of this country and co-operate with us in upbuilding and developing it.

Thirty thousand Canadians now on Salisbury Plain will soon be at the front and fifty thousand more are in training in Canada. As fresh contingents go forward, further forces will be enlisted so long as the need continues. In this great testing time, Canada has made known to the Empire and to the world her true spirit. It has animated the men who are flocking in thousands to do their part; it has equally inspired the women who in every city, village and hamlet are busy in manifold activities for aid and solace wherever needed. The magnificently generous response of Montreal to every appeal for patriotic purposes has already spoken for itself, but I may be permitted to testify my warm appreciation.

We cannot yet foresee the end of this conflict, but there can be only one conclusion, however long delayed. To overthrow the most powerful and highly organized system of militarism that ever existed must necessarily entail a terrible and perhaps a protracted struggle. We have not glorified war or sought to depart from the paths of peace; but our hearts are firm and united in an inflexible determination that the cause for which we have drawn the sword shall be maintained to an honourable and triumphant issue.

## *A Speech before the Canadian Club at Halifax December 18, 1914*

Those upon whom the duty of directing public affairs has fallen during the past four months are sensible of the tremendous responsibilities imposed by the appalling conflict which has been forced upon our Empire. They have been sustained and cheered by the support and co-operation of the whole nation. It has not always been possible to make haste as rapidly as some would desire, but we have understood the earnestness of those who sometimes have felt constrained to urge that greater expedition should be made in sending aid to the Empire's armies.

My native province, in common with the whole Dominion, has nobly responded to the call of duty. Under the laws of Canada, our citizens may be called out to defend our own territory, but cannot be required to go beyond the seas except for the defence of Canada itself. There has not been, there will not be, compulsion or conscription. Freely and voluntarily the manhood of Canada stands ready to fight beyond the seas in this just quarrel for the Empire and its liberties. With 8,000 men engaged in garrison and outpost duty, 33,000 beyond the seas and 50,000 under arms in Canada, as many more waiting for the opportunity to enlist, and tens of thousands training in Home Guards and similar military organizations, the races which make up the population of this Dominion have shown that they are not decadent. This province has furnished a force of nearly 3,000 men for garrison and outpost duty, besides a thousand now beyond the seas in the first Expeditionary Force and another thousand now enrolled and eagerly awaiting the opportunity to go forward. Including Home Guards and other unofficial military organizations, about 120,000 Canadians are now under arms. Remember, however, that Germany's military strength can hardly be measured. The entire nation is trained to arms and her preparation for war is on a scale which it is almost impossible to estimate. Our Empire is under the temporary disadvantage of lacking such organization, and preparation on a tremendous scale is now necessary. We have been obliged to undertake it since war broke out, and it is essential and even vital to hold the enemy in check while it is being provided. I have reason to believe that the results achieved by the Allied armies for that purpose are considered satisfactory by those best

qualified to judge. It would be not only unjust, cruel, and useless, but positively fatal to the success of our arms that troops should be sent into the fighting line without thorough training, necessary equipment and effective organization; and this cannot be accomplished within a brief period. No effort is being spared in Canada or elsewhere in the Empire to effect its accomplishment. There is every reason to anticipate that before many weeks our forces on Salisbury Plain will be in the fighting line, where they will discharge their duty with credit to themselves and to this Dominion. The record of South Africa inspires us with that just confidence. As soon as they are ordered to the front, a second Expeditionary Force will go forward. Thereupon, the force training in Canada will immediately be recruited to its present strength and men now waiting to enlist will thus be given their opportunity. I fix no limit on the force we shall send forward, for no man can predict with confidence what the ultimate need may be. The preservation of our Empire is worth fighting for, and Canada is prepared to send all that are necessary.

I have said that we lack military preparation on a great scale, and the reason is obvious. Our Empire has been trained in the paths of peace and the best safeguard of its existence has been found in our Navy. The British naval forces, with the powerful assistance of the allied navies, have been able not only to muzzle effectively the chief naval forces of Germany in the North Sea, but also to keep such command of the ocean as to prevent either dangerous raids or prolonged and serious interruption of commerce. Without that assistance, the task would have been infinitely more difficult, and perhaps impossible. We realize only imperfectly the immensity of the oceans and the extreme difficulty of overtaking and disposing of swift and powerful cruisers carrying out a systematic plan of raiding and marauding. There have been disasters which must always be anticipated in war. Our tribute is due to Admiral Cradock and those who went down with him, among them four young Canadians, fighting to the last against overwhelming odds. That defeat has since been amply wiped out.

Information has already been given in Parliament respecting certain steps taken by the Government during the months immediately preceding the outbreak of war, and these may be of interest to you at the moment. The Committee of Imperial Defence, as at present constituted, was established in 1904. It consists of the Prime Minister of Great Britain and of such persons as he may summon to attend it. Practically all members of the British Cabinet attend its deliberations from time to time, and usually the more important members of the Cabinet are present. In

addition to these, naval and military experts and technical officers of the various departments concerned are in attendance when required. The results of the Committee's labours are embodied in a "War Book", which sets forth in great detail necessary measures to be taken upon the outbreak of war and carefully considered arrangements for carrying out these measures without delay or confusion. The work of the Committee is largely carried on by sub-committees, which are often constituted in part by persons who are not members of the general committee and who are selected for their special knowledge of a particular subject. Among the permanent sub-committees is one called "The Over-Sea Defence Committee", which gives particular attention to matters affecting the defence of the Overseas Dominions.

There had been no committee in Canada charged with the same duties; and conditions made it desirable that we should be prepared for grave events which might transpire without much warning. All the innumerable contingencies arising out of war cannot be provided for; but reasonable foresight and effective preparation can guard against many of them. In addition to well-considered arrangements for the necessary mobilization of military forces to defend our territory, there are many matters for which systematic and careful preparation should obviously be made in advance. The precautions which must be taken against possible surprise attack when relations with another power have become strained; the censorship of submarine cable and wireless telegraph messages; the detention of enemy ships, both public and private; the detention of British ships laden with contraband of war; necessary measures to prohibit the export of warlike stores required for our own forces and to prevent the export of any such stores for the use of the enemy; the arrest of merchant ships which are intended for conversion into warships, and of cable and other ships specially useful to the enemy; the closing of certain wireless telegraph stations and the supervision and guarding of those kept open; the preparation of secret codes and cyphers for communication of intelligence; arrangements for the transport of troops by land and by sea to guard important points; the erection of necessary additional fortifications; the establishing and buoying of war channels in important harbours; the provision of necessary patrol and look-out ships; the examination of vessels entering port and the establishment of regulations respecting their entrance and departure; regulations for the prevention of espionage and to ensure the safety of fortifications, arsenals, military and naval depots and dockyards; the preparation in advance of all the necessary Orders-in-Council and regulations, including instructions to hundreds of

officers; the preparation and transmission to important officials of sealed directions to be opened only in the event of war; and generally the co-ordination of all the activities of the various Departments of the Government so that there might be no confusion through overlapping and no disaster through omission; all this required, and it had to receive, protracted, unremitting and laborious consideration and attention in advance if we were to be reasonably prepared. Early in January of the present year I directed a conference of the deputy heads of the various Departments of the Government and instructed them to undertake the necessary preparation and to report to me from time to time. The Conference consisted of the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Governor-General's Military Secretary, the Deputy Minister of Militia and Defence, the Deputy Minister of the Naval Service, the Deputy Minister of Justice, the Commissioner of Customs, the Deputy Minister of Marine and Fisheries, the Deputy Postmaster-General, and the Deputy Minister of Railways and Canals, with the Director of Military Operations, Major Gordon Hall, and the Director of Gunnery, Lieut. R. M. Stevens, as Joint Secretaries. The work commenced in January, and necessary arrangements were practically completed during July. Every Department of the Government was instructed to develop its own line of action in detail, and the whole was subsequently co-ordinated and incorporated into one scheme, indicating the course to be followed by the Government as a whole upon the outbreak of war. The labours of the Committee resulted in the preparation of a "War Book", which was completed only a few weeks before this appalling struggle began. It is impossible to over-estimate the advantage which resulted from the steps thus taken. While war was impending and when it broke out, measures which were immediately and urgently necessary were taken instantly and with an entire absence of confusion. Each detail had been worked out with precision and every necessary step had been arranged in advance. All details of preparation, arrangement and instruction had been systematically compiled into the "War Book", which co-ordinated the activities of the several Departments and rendered possible an effective co-operation with the Imperial authorities, which otherwise would have been exceedingly difficult if not largely impracticable. The work of the Committee was most efficiently performed, and the thanks of the country are due to all its members, especially to the Joint Secretaries, Major Gordon Hall and Lieut. Stevens.

The German people have been taught that war is a national duty and indeed a necessity of national development. According

to their view, other nations had been spreading their power and influence throughout the world while the German people were engrossed in the higher considerations of philosophy and religion, so that now the German Empire must win by the sword that which it had omitted to secure before the German race was consolidated under Prussian dominance. Their most influential writers treat all proposals to establish international courts of arbitration as designed to prevent the legitimate expansion of their Empire. In the introduction to one of his latest works, General Bernhardi, in speaking of international arbitration, uses this language:

“We Germans, therefore, must not be deceived by such official efforts to maintain the peace. Arbitration courts must evidently always consider the existing judicial and territorial rights. For a rising State, which has not yet attained the position due to it, which is in urgent need of colonial expansion, and can only accomplish it chiefly at the cost of others, these treaties therefore augur ill at once as being apt to prevent a rearrangement of power.”

And again:

“If we wish to gain the position in the world that is due to us, we must rely on our sword, renounce all weakly visions of peace, and eye the dangers surrounding us with resolute and unflinching courage.”

And again:

“Every State would sin against itself if it did not employ its power when the right moment has arrived.”

And again:

“Germany’s further development as a world-power is possible only after a final settlement with England.”

Especially, the German people have been taught that the British Empire stands in their way and must be dealt with at an opportune moment as Denmark, Austria and France were in turn overthrown. Germany is, beyond question, the greatest military power in the world. The organized military forces of our Empire are absolutely insignificant in comparison; but the conditions of our existence make it necessary that Great Britain should be, beyond question, the greatest naval power. The ocean pathways are the veins and arteries of the Empire, and when these are cut or obstructed it cannot continue to exist. Naval power is not in the least essential to the national existence of Germany, yet she has proclaimed that her future is on the sea. What that betokens may be gathered from her past upon land. Notwithstanding every

attempt by British statesmen to bring about a better understanding, Germany has carried out persistently and defiantly a policy which was openly put forward and heralded as a challenge to British naval power.

The Prussian military oligarchy dominates Germany, and the people have become obsessed with the religion of valour and the doctrine that might is the highest and indeed the only right. Public opinion, as we understand it, is a force almost unknown and hardly realized there. There is practically no public opinion other than the Government's opinion. Moreover, a nation that has been consolidated through war and that has been continuously victorious in its wars for more than fifty years and has astonished the world by its military prowess, a nation whose people have never experienced the horrors of invasion to which they have subjected other countries, probably becomes intoxicated with the idea of continued victory. A salutary lesson will assuredly be learned by the German people before the sword is sheathed in this struggle. We realize that a great task has been forced upon our Empire, but it has not been lightly undertaken. Canada, in common with the other Dominions, will do her part in seeing that it is properly and thoroughly performed.

This appalling war could undoubtedly have been avoided if Germany had consented to the mediation which Sir Edward Grey so earnestly urged and in which all the powers except Germany were prepared to participate. At the very outset, Belgium, a small State possessing no considerable military strength, desiring merely to remain unmolested, and having absolutely no interest in the quarrel, was ruthlessly invaded by Germany and forced into war. There was no possible alternative; if Belgium resisted the German armies which invaded her territories she became involved in war with Germany; if she permitted German armies to pass unhindered through her territories for the purpose of attacking France, she necessarily became involved in war with France. The valor and heroism of the Belgian army have excited the admiration of the world, as the undeserved sufferings of the Belgian people have commanded its profound sympathy.

After Great Britain had asked from Germany the assurance which both Prussia and France had given in 1870, and which France gave in 1914, that Belgian neutrality would not be violated, inasmuch as it was guaranteed by all the great powers of Europe, contemptuous reference was made by the German Chancellor to the treaty as a "scrap of paper". That cynical and even degenerate conception reverts to standards which are beyond the limits of recorded history. Under such a misconception of public right and

international duty, how is it possible for nations to deal with each other? Three thousand years ago it was considered disgraceful that a nation should violate its solemn engagements. The fundamental principle upon which the internal organization and the external relations of each nation are based is the honourable fulfilment of engagements and pledges and the assurance that they will be so fulfilled. The constitution of many countries is but a "scrap of paper". Our laws are recorded in "scraps of paper". The dealings of mankind are carried on by "scraps of paper". All our commercial fabric is founded on "scraps of paper". From Magna Charta to the British North America Act, our rights and liberties have been safeguarded by "scraps of paper". In short, the thought and the achievement of all the centuries is embodied in "scraps of paper". When terms of peace come to be considered, the Prussian cynicism touching treaty obligations must not be forgotten.

Amid all the horror and welter of this world-wide conflict we may yet discern hope for the future. It will arouse, I hope, the conscience of all the nations to bring about concerted action for the reduction of armaments and for the placing of the whole world upon what one might term a peace footing. Upon this continent there is a boundary line of nearly four thousand miles between this country and the great kindred nation to the South. That boundary is unguarded and unfortified as between the two nations, and we sleep securely without thought of war or invasion. The proposal to commemorate our Century of Peace has commanded the approval of the people and Government of Canada, and I trust it will be worthily realized.

And since this struggle began, one cannot but perceive an awakened national spirit and consciousness in this Dominion. In a young and rapidly developing country such as this, the aspirations of material prosperity are bound to impose themselves very strongly upon the imagination. To those who held aloft the lamp of idealism it sometimes seemed that the clamour of the market place, the din of the factory, and the rush of the locomotive had absorbed the minds of the people. But when the day came which searched their spirit, Canadians did not fail to remember that there is something greater than material prosperity and something greater than even life itself. The wonderful and beautiful spirit of mutual helpfulness, of desire to aid, the spirit of self-sacrifice, of patriotism, of devotion, which in these latter months has inspired the Canadian people from ocean to ocean will leave an enduring mark upon our national life. It has dissolved prejudice and curbed discord and dissension. And who of you will not do reverence to

the courage, the devotion and the patriotism of the women of Canada; those who with undaunted hearts but tear-dimmed eyes have seen husband, son or brother go forth to battle; those who in a thousand missions of aid and of mercy are unwearied in their infinite labours of love? Who of you will not say with me, God bless the women of Canada!

The British Empire, as presently constituted, is a very recent creation or rather evolution. The British Islands, which constitute the metropolitan state of the Empire, have no written constitution and the overseas Dominions are governed under an apparent confusion of statutes, charters, conventions and understandings. To those who do not comprehend the governing principle which pervades all this seeming confusion, the Empire seems to have no logical right to exist at all; and naturally they regard it as decadent and look for disunion and weakness in the hour of trial. But the principle of autonomous self-government, applied wherever conditions permit and to the greatest extent that they would permit, has been and is its great cardinal feature. There has been no weakness and no disunion, because the unity and strength of the Empire are securely founded upon its liberties, wherein alone enduring strength is found. Thus the dominions of the Empire, united by the tie of a common allegiance and of a common ideal, present today an unbroken front.

In this country we are a peace loving people, and great tasks lie before us in the peaceful development of our resources. We have no lasting quarrel with the German people, who have great qualities and whose achievements in every important sphere of human progress are conspicuous, although they are temporarily misled by the militarism of Prussia; but we will fight to the death against the vain attempt of an arrogant militarist oligarchy to impose upon the world its ideals of force and violence and to achieve its unworthy purpose by "blood and iron".

## *A Speech before the Canadian Club at Winnipeg December 29, 1914*

From Halifax to Winnipeg I have journeyed across this vast continent for a distance greater than that which would span the Atlantic; and yet I am only at the threshold of these great western provinces, which have responded so splendidly to the call of duty that came more than four months ago. Through all the vastness of this Dominion, with its scattered centres of population and its diversity of race, tradition and creed, there is but one voice as to the justice of the cause for which we have drawn the sword and but one reply as to the obligation which rests upon us. Nowhere in this Dominion has that response and that voice been more unanimous and more emphatic than in this great gateway city of the West.

In this Dominion, confronted as we are with peaceful tasks that tax to the fullest extent our energies in the development of our vast territory, and in the upbuilding of a great free nation on the northern half of this continent, it is almost impossible to realize a conception which regards the waging of war as a justifiable, desirable and even necessary means of national progress and development. The three great wars in which Germany has engaged during the past fifty years have brought to the nation prestige, territory, huge war indemnities and an astonishing increase of national power and influence. During all that period German soil has never been oppressed by the foot of an invader and its people have been spared many of the miseries which war has brought to the nations over whom they triumphed. The religion of valour; the doctrine that might constitutes the highest and only right; that the State is bound to exercise through war its increasing power for its own advancement and for the diffusion of its ideals and culture; the belief that German ideals, methods and culture embody the highest and best results of civilization and that Germany military dominance represents what is best not only for Germany but for the whole world; the economic and commercial advantages and the colonial expansion which German military prowess would secure for the nation through war; these and the like considerations explain in part the concentration of Germany's thought upon the ideal of force, of war and of conquest. Their Government possesses a control of public opinion which we find it difficult to realize. All

the influences which mould the thought of the people have continuously proclaimed that war, especially war with our Empire, was a stern and inevitable duty. Their ruling classes constitute a military autocracy, and the military caste with its all-commanding authority was bent on war. Beyond question, there were influences in Germany which made for peace and favoured peaceful development; but those forces apparently lacked organization and leadership. Moreover, there has been evident in Germany during the past quarter of a century a rising spirit of democracy which has brought inquietude to the ruling oligarchy and to those who are devoted to the principles of absolutism. There was great confidence that a successful war would be a powerful factor in checking or quelling that spirit.

Between the Prussian autocracy and its ideal of world-wide dominance, British supremacy upon the sea has stood as a barrier which must disappear if the ideal was to be attained; and so it was proclaimed that Germany's future was on the sea. We are only beginning to realize the enormous military strength of the German Empire. We are only commencing to understand how immensely superior she stood in military organization, preparation and resources to all the other nations at the outbreak of war. Wielding that tremendous power, which made any apprehension of attack by our Empire a mere idle dream, Germany has for at least twenty years, with constantly increasing emphasis, pressed her challenge of the seas upon the British Empire. Germany well knew, as Britain knew, what that challenge meant and what would ensue from the failure to accept it. We had either to admit our inability to guard adequately the pathways of the Empire and thus retire ingloriously from the contest forced mercilessly upon us, or we had to make good the Empire's right to exist; and that meant the supremacy of our naval forces against any attack that might reasonably be apprehended. Thus the contest in naval armaments, which British statesmen have vainly endeavoured to prevent, has proceeded from year to year. No shot was fired, no ships were sunk, no battle was fought; but it was, in truth, war between the two nations. International issues are often determined otherwise than by actual hostilities; and Great Britain realized that when her power upon the seas could be successfully challenged by Germany the day of her departure was at hand and indeed had already arrived.

On three recognized occasions during the past ten years Germany has brought Europe to the verge of actual war. On two of these occasions she imposed her will upon Europe, but on the third Great Britain stood firmly resolute and Germany receded.

The events of 1911 have never been forgotten; and there is reason to believe that, but for the commanding influence and untiring efforts of Sir Edward Grey, the war which broke out in 1914 would have been forced upon Europe during the previous year. I have spoken of three occasions; but as was once said to me by a statesman of great experience in the foreign office: "The international kettle is always on the verge of boiling, although the people know nothing of it until the steam begins to escape." When the secrets of diplomatic records come to be fully disclosed I do not doubt that in each of the past ten years German aggressiveness will be found to have made war imminent or at least probable.

Not only here, but in the British Islands, military preparation has been imperfect because development has proceeded along the paths of peace. The instinct of the British people is against militarism and great standing armies are not viewed with favour. But in the British Islands and in the self-governing Dominions alone there are at least sixty millions of people, a population nearly equal to that of Germany. If our preparation for the struggle was insignificant compared with that of Germany, let us not forget that her resources are insignificant compared with those of this Empire. There are many things which count besides armed forces in the field. In the organization of modern war all the resources of the nation must be reckoned with. Consider those of Canada, which even during the coming year can supply food products to an almost unlimited extent. Our great transportation systems are an invaluable asset even for military purposes. How was it possible to assemble at Valcartier Camp within two weeks after the outbreak of war a force of 35,000 men gathered from a territory nearly as large as Europe? How was it possible to arm, equip and organize them so that the force was ready to sail within six weeks from the day on which the order was given? This was possible because of the organizing ability, the great transportation systems and the industrial activities of Canada. Already our factories are turning out not only clothing and equipment of all kinds, but munitions of war on a great scale and of a character that we did not dream of producing four months ago. Our inexhaustible resources in the forests, the fisheries, the coal and minerals of Canada are tremendous assets in this war. All this must tell in the long run, as Germany will yet know. In a word, we have the resources, while Germany has the preparation.

The ability of the Allied armies to hold in check the powerful forces of Germany pending the preparation which we lack has been amply demonstrated; and the armies of the Empire, as well as its enormous resources, are already being organized on such a

scale as leaves no room for doubt as to the issue of this struggle. The preparation must be thoroughly and adequately made. It would be not only useless, but criminal, to send our citizen soldiers into the field of battle without the organization, training and discipline which are essential under conditions of modern warfare.

So here in the West, as well as in the East of this Dominion and throughout the Empire, armies are being organized, equipment and armaments are being prepared and we are making ready for the day when the hosts of Germany shall be driven back within their own frontiers and the march begins which shall not end until the Prussian oligarchy and its dominance over the German people shall have come to a deserved and inevitable end.

During the past three months I have seen at least 60,000 Canadians under arms, and of these 30,000 will shortly be at the battle front. Abroad and at home we have more than 100,000 Canadians preparing for the sternest of all a soldier's duties. Those who are shortly to be at the front will fight side by side with the best troops in the world, and we have a reasonable confidence, inspired by the memories of the past, that they will bear themselves worthily and with honour to themselves and their country. Those who are acquiring the training and discipline of the soldier will do well to remember that they are as truly serving their country as if they were at the front, for without this their service would be ineffective and useless.

It is hardly necessary to emphasize the unity of purpose which actuates the entire Empire in this struggle. For the ruling classes of Germany it is difficult, if not impossible, to comprehend, even imperfectly, the strength of an Empire bound together by ties which to them seem so imperfect and so attenuated. The ideals of government upon which the German Empire is based are so profoundly different from those which constitute the strength and hold firm the unity of the British Dominions, that this result is not surprising. Our self-governing Dominions are united by the ties of a common allegiance to the Crown; but the Crown has become the symbol of the people's sovereignty. According to our conception and practice of government, the King reigns to execute the will of the people who rule. The strength of the Empire rests upon the eternal foundation of liberty expressed in the ideal and consummation of autonomous self-government which is vested in the people of the self-governing Dominions as of right and not of grace. The spirit of Prussian absolutism dominating the people of the German Empire regards any such form of Government as weak and ineffective. They conceive that it represents only a passing phase and that the German theory of absolutism cannot

fail to impress itself upon the whole world in due course. So that this struggle involves issues which transcend even the interests and the future of our own Empire and which embrace the whole theory and practice of government for all the future generations of the world. If the militarist and autocratic ideals of the Prussian oligarchy can assert themselves in world-wide dominance, the progress and development of democracy will either have been stayed forever or the work of centuries will have been undone and mankind must struggle anew for ideals of freedom and rights of self-government which have been established as the birthright of the British people. Thus the powers of democracy are themselves on trial today and the issue of this conflict concerns not only the existence of the British Empire, but all the world-wide aspirations that have found expression in the freedom which its people enjoy.

In so far as this Empire may be said to possess a constitution, it is of modern growth and is still in the stage of development. One can hardly conceive that it will ever distinctly emerge from that stage or attain a status in which constitutional development is no longer to be anticipated. Indeed, the genius of the British people and all our past history lead us to believe the contrary. The steps in advance have been usually gradual and always practical; and they have been taken rather by instinct than upon any carefully considered theory. But the very liberties of the Empire made possible results which no absolutism could foresee. Thus the unity of purpose inspiring the British Dominions and their participation in this war upon so vast a scale has amazed the Prussian war-lords. Also it has shattered their confident belief that the military resources of those Dominions were entirely negligible. It is within the bounds of probability that the four free nations of the overseas dominions will have put into the fighting line 250,000 men if this war should continue for another year. That result, or even the results which have already obtained, must mark a great epoch in the history of inter-imperial relations. There are those within sound of my voice who will see the overseas Dominions surpass in wealth and population the British Islands; there are children playing in your streets who may see Canada alone attain that eminence. Thus it is impossible to believe that the existing status, so far as it concerns the control of foreign policy and extra-imperial relations, can remain as it is today. All are conscious of the complexity of the problem thus presented; but no one need despair of a satisfactory solution and no one can doubt the profound influence which the tremendous events of the past few months and of those in the immediate future must exercise upon one of the most interesting and far-reaching questions ever presented for the consideration of statesmen.

There are no more loyal and patriotic citizens of Canada than the people of German descent in all parts of our Dominion. Both in the East and in the West they have been earnest and active in endeavour and in aid. And it is particularly to be noted that citizens of German descent in Canada are a peace loving people and averse to all forms of militarism. They thoroughly understand and appreciate the principles of democratic government; they detest absolutism and abhor war. But if the teachings of the most advanced thinkers of Germany are to be regarded and if the course of the German Government is to be considered as expressive of the national spirit, no such ideal animates the German people. Germany is disposed to dismiss with indifference and even contempt all proposals for settling international differences by peaceful methods. Indeed, the German Government seems to consider any such proposals as expressly directed against Germany's interests which, as they conceive, demand that her military power must inevitably be employed for her national development and advancement through the subjugation and humiliation of other nations and the appropriation of such of their possessions as she may find most useful for her purposes. This conception carries with it the ideal that in all the centuries to come brute force shall be the highest right; that the most powerful nation shall be a law to itself; that its treaties and obligations may be put aside when necessity arises, and that the national will shall alone be the judge of that necessity. If all the teachings of Christianity and all the ideals of modern civilization point only to this result, mankind has not great reason to regard its ideals and standards as on a higher plane than those of the brute creation. Indeed, one should then say that man was made a little lower than the brutes.

“No more? A monster, then, a dream,  
A discord. Dragons of the prime,  
That tare each other in their slime,  
Were mellow music matched with him.”

Such ideals are not helpful to humanity, and the sooner they are dispelled and dismissed the better for the nation which entertains them and the better for the world. If this war was necessary for that purpose, let us not regret that it came when it did.

In common with the whole world, we fully recognize and appreciate the great qualities of the German people and all that they have achieved in the highest spheres of human activity and usefulness. With them we desired no contest, except in generous rivalry for the advancement of all that is best in modern civiliza-

tion. With them we have no quarrel, save that they have forsaken the cause of liberty and democracy in rendering an unquestioning obedience to the militarist and arrogant autocracy to which they have surrendered the control of their national life. In this struggle against the Prussian oligarchy and against its ideals, Canada, in common with all the Empire, is prepared to fight, and intends to fight, to the death. Reverses may come, sacrifices will be inevitable, there may be days of doubt and even of gloom; but the fortitude, the determination and the resourcefulness which did not fail the people of this Empire in the storm and peril of more than a century ago and which have maintained the northern half of this continent as part of the Empire, are still our common inheritance and will not fail us now.

There is but one way to deal effectively with the Prussian gospel of force and violence and the Prussian ideal of absolutism. It must be smashed utterly and completely. The sooner that is accomplished the better for the German people and for all the nations. Canada joins whole-heartedly in that great task. What has been done is known to all. What remains to be done shall be limited only by the need.