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MR. EDEN IN OTTAWA

The following is the text of the speech of Mr. Anthony Eden, Foreign Secretary, in Ottawa today :-

"I say definitely", Mr. Eden declared "that I am not prepared to take risks again with either Germany, Italy or Japan. I have no faith in the promises of their statesmen nor in the smooth assurances of their apologists." Speaking from floor of the Canadian House of Commons Mr. Eden was addressing members of both Houses of the Canadian Parliament. He continued :-

"There is only one security for mankind in respect of all of them namely, to ensure that they are totally disarmed and in no position ever to try their strength again. Then indeed peace may again have its chance. Together we can win the war and win the peace. Nothing less should content us." Mr. Eden concluded "it is our duty to hand on to our children a world in which freedom can live and man can command his soul free from the constant dread which has shadowed our own time. To that task we have set our hands and will dedicate ourselves. Let us give this pledge this afternoon. We will neither falter nor fail till we have redeemed our word and opened to future generations a peace and promise that we have never known".

The full text of Mr. Eden's speech was as follows :-

"I am deeply grateful to you Mr. Speaker and to the Canadian Parliament for the compliment which you have paid to me in inviting me to speak to you here from the floor of the House.

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I understand of course that the compliment is paid not only to me personally but to our own House of Commons at home of which it happens that I am for the time being leader. I feel sure that all my colleagues in the House of Commons at Westminster would wish me to express to you their warmest thanks and gratitude for this truly thoughtful gesture. There is no compliment that could appeal more to the heart of any House of Commons man. Sir, this procedure and these surroundings are familiar to me though I confess that your house is at once more spacious and more generously fitted than our own and less battered. As you are probably aware our own Chamber in Westminster has been destroyed and we now meet in what was formerly "Another Place". Nonetheless I can assure you that the spirit of the House of Commons lives on undimmed in its present more august setting. To think of Canada in these times is to think of her armed forces by land, sea and air. Let me then speak first of these. I have been lucky enough to see much of the Canadian forces from the earliest days of the war. As Secretary of State for Dominions in the opening months of the conflict it was my privilege to welcome the first contingents of your army to reach the shores of the old country. I shall never forget that scene. It was a beautiful winter morning at a famous port which I suppose must still remain anonymous.

I was a spectator of the scene from the flagship of the Commander in Chief of the Home Fleet. As the great armada of liners swung into sight under the escort of the Royal Navy cheering Canadian troops lined the decks and the band of the flagship played "O Canada". I suppose that seldom in human history have so many great transports and so many powerful ships of war been assembled at one time. That was Canada making her contribution in the hour of need. And that was only the beginning. Many contingents of your army followed the forerunners. When in April 1940 a few brief weeks before the collapse of France the Prime Minister, Mr. Winston Churchill, formed his government he asked me to take over the War Office and once again I had the opportunity of meeting the officers and men of the Canadian forces. Those were the dark days of 1940 when the presence of your troops was at once a safeguard to our threatened citadel and an inspiration to our own effort. Since those days the Canadian army in Britain has had to endure a long period of training and of waiting. They have sustained this ordeal with a patience and sense of discipline that has won the admiration of us all. Save for the attack at Dieppe carried through with that brilliant daring the world has come to associate with Canadian army, the lot of your fellow countrymen in Britain has been one of waiting for the hour that will come. In all sincerity I can say to you that as the months and years have passed the affection of the British people for their Canadian guests and comrades has grown until we have come to regard them not as visiting kinsfolk but as our very own men whom we respect and admire.

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We know that one day their distinguished commander, General McNaughton will lead these men to victory. Now let me speak of the undying achievements of the Royal Canadian Air Force made possible by the well planned execution of the Commonwealth air training scheme. It so happens that as Dominions Secretary I also witnessed the first conception and early expansion of that scheme. I don't think that any of us then realized the extent to which its development might influence the whole course of the war even though its potentialities did inspire us to do all we could to ensure the success of its early beginnings. If Canada had done nothing else in this war her predominant share in this Commonwealth air training scheme would ensure her an enduring place in the roll of fame. As we cast our minds back to those early days of the war our recollection above all others dominates the minds of all my countrymen. We can never forget that when we went to war to redeem our pledged word you stood with us. Four self-governing Dominions of the British crown then took their stand in partnership with us. That event is part of recorded history.

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It is an event of which the British Commonwealth will always be supremely proud. That close association in the hour of danger was the outward expression of the inner meaning of the British Commonwealth. Let us for a moment consider its significance. It meant that a number of self governing communities scattered throughout the world realized as clearly as we who were closer to the danger the peril that beset mankind. Understanding full well that the threat to one was a threat to all they rallied unanimously in defence of a common cause. That event was all the more remarkable when we reflect that the citizens of the Commonwealth are not all of one common stock.

Here in Canada are millions of French descent whilst in South Africa the majority is of Dutch origin. Moreover India and the colonial territories have also from the first day taken their place at our side. When therefore all is measured there has been no more striking, no more inspiring episode in human history than this free and spontaneous action by all the peoples of the British Empire. Since those days we have battled through stern times together. We have known dark days and brighter hopes.

/Today

Today, when we survey the scene of world war, we are conscious of the support of many and powerful friends so that if we hold together and persist until the end the decision is not in doubt. In recent months encouraging reports have reached us from many theatres of war. We are entitled to rejoice at them but there would be an element of danger in this were we for one instant to relax our efforts. The better news must not tempt us to underrate our enemies' strength; it must nerve us to greater effort. Our Turkish friends have given many wise sayings to the world. There is one in particular which I will commend to you as a suitable motto for the stern business of war: "Though thine enemy be an ant, imagine that he is an elephant". And so, Mr. Speaker, it is our duty to concentrate with all our strength upon the first task in hand, which is the utter defeat of our enemies. It is well that we should take thought and counsel together as to the future problems that may beset us. It would be bad if we were to allow such necessary preparation to dim for an instant our clear vision of the work at hand and our determination to see it through. Even as I speak at this hour the Battle of the Atlantic is raging. It is yet undecided. In the struggle that has ebbed and flowed throughout these months and years the Royal Canadian Navy has played a glorious part. The epic of the convoys is never ending. We must still regard the U-Boat as our greatest menace. It is the ceaseless task of our navies to protect our lifelines and to fight a way through for our convoys. The enemy is clearly staking heavily upon his U-Boat offensive.

We must not only continue but intensify our efforts against this desperate challenge. You may be confident that we shall do so. And now Sir having made these provisos let me speak a little of the future. As the war progresses we see the conception of the United Nations gradually taking shape. I believe it is better that this development should come about in this gradual way. Cooperation which is born of stern necessity and forged by experience has the best chance to survive into the years of peace. It is better to build as we go along, to test and develop it rather than to devise all at once some elaborate structure into which we should seek to fit the component parts as best we may. In this sphere of international endeavour the British Commonwealth has its specific contribution to make. It has been our practice to allow and encourage cooperation to grow. We have neither rigid rules nor precise formula between us but we have the spirit of understanding and we know the road that we would travel.

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If we can infuse this same spirit into the sphere of international relations we shall have made an essential contribution to a peace that can endure. Mr. Eden continued in French. Il y a une chose que j'aimerais vous faire savoir a propos de notre peuple britannique et c'est qu'apres trois annees de guerre ce peuple ne montre aucun signe de faiblesse. Les britanniques sont unis dans une determination tenace pour mener ce conflit a bonne fin jusqu'au bout car ils ont pour eux la fortitude le courace et l'energie. La diffamation d'avant guerre de leurs ennemis qui les taxaient d'etre un peuple epuise et fini a ete refutee avec une vigueur achevee incomparable dans l'histoire. Vant tout le peuple britannique a un esprit tres jeune et vous pouvez compter sur eux de l'est a l'ouest jusqu'ala fin de la guerre jusqu'a la paix victorieuse. Bien des nations ont souffert douloureusement dans cette guerre. Pour la france l'epreuve fut surtout dur et amer. Toute ma vie j'ai cru a la grandeur de la france ma foi dans son avenir est aujourd'hui innebranlable. Pour notre part nous n'avons qu'un desire, c'est celui de voir l'union retablie parmi tout les francais qui ont jere de se battre contre l'ennemi commun. Nous serons toujours prêts a leur preter "mainforte" pour en arriver a cette fin car c'est le premier pas vers la regeneration de la france et le commencement d'un nouveau chapitre dans sa glorieuse histoire.

Then returning to English, Mr. Eden proceeded: When we consider the unhappy years between the two wars we should do so in the determination to learn the lessons of our failure. I have had myself some experience as has your Prime Minister and other Canadian statesmen of the attempts which have been made to keep the peace by international machinery. One lesson is predominant in my mind.

/The League

The League of Nations suffered no doubt from a number of human failings and shortcomings. But what above all it lacked was a sufficiently wide international authority to express its decisions with conviction and an adequate force to see them executed. So it was that the gangster nations, Germany, Italy and Japan could test their strength and work their will. We must never be in that position again. It is essential that when this war is over the United Nations should maintain sufficient force to ensure that neither Germany nor Italy nor Japan can ever again plunge the world into war. The experience through which I have lived is similar to that which many of you have known. I have taken part, as you have done, as a soldier in one war which we had hoped was a war to end wars. I now watch my son preparing to take part in a second war. It is our duty to see that this cruel and inhuman lot is not also the heritage of our children's children. For my part I therefore say definitely that I am not prepared to take risks again with either Germany, Italy or Japan. I have no faith in the promises of their statesmen nor in the smooth assurances of their apologists. There is only one security for mankind in respect of all of them, to ensure that they are totally disarmed and in no position ever to try their strength again. Then indeed peace may have its chance. After the bitter lessons which we have learned we must insist upon the fullest precautions. To say these things is not to show a lack of humanity but to clarify our thought on issues upon which the future life of the world will depend. It is no easy task to co-ordinate the action of the United Nations in war, nor will it be simple in peace, but if the basis which I am propounding is accepted as I am sure it is by us all then the task can be achieved.

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I have myself been greatly encouraged by the conversations which I have had upon these matters a year ago in Moscow and more recently in Washington. They have been an inspiration to me. Admittedly there will be differences and divergencies amongst us. They are not insurmountable because at heart we want the same things - international security so that all of our peoples may live and develop their lives in freedom and at peace. For this task we shall need not only a close understanding between the British Commonwealth and the United States, Russia and China, but the full cooperation of all the United Nations. Together we can win the war and win the peace. Nothing less should content us. It is our duty to hand on to our children a world in which freedom can live and man command his soul; free from the constant dread which has shadowed our own time. To that task we have set our hands and will dedicate our lives. Let us give this pledge this afternoon. We will neither falter nor fail till we have redeemed our word and opened to future generations a peace and promise that we have never known.

CANADA HOUSE