

Mr. NICKLE: His guilt or innocence does not depend upon the whim of the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State decides whether there shall be a prosecution. Whether we can improve the Act by changing a word here and there is a matter for consideration. No man who has been close to war collections throughout this country can fail to appreciate that the time has come when there should be some regulation and control of those collections, and that the Government being the responsible authority should take cognizance of and give sanction to those collections before they are made.

Mr. OLIVER: I am very much in sympathy with the stated object of the Bill, and very much in sympathy with the statement just made by my hon. friend (Mr. Nickle). The difficulty is that the Bill is not in accordance with his statement. Either the Bill should require the registration of all effort towards war charity, or it should not require such registration. Subsection 1 provides for registration, and provides for no registration. I do not know at all what the next succeeding subsection provides for. If the Government thinks it wise to put a limitation upon collections for war charities, let them say so, and let them provide for that registration, but do not let them say in one breath "you must register," and in the next breath, or in fact in the same breath say "you need not register." Let us have an understanding that there will be a fair deal in this matter, so that there may not be two organizations of benevolent people in a certain place, one securing the authority of the minister, and the other failing to do so. I think we should have some definite statement of what the Government means.

Sir THOMAS WHITE: The Bill speaks for itself.

Mr. OLIVER: But, as I read the Bill, it does not give me any indication of what the Government is going to do in any particular case. I submit it is not legislation which is worthy of this House or of the Government. There is no reason why the time of the House should be taken up by the discussion of a Bill of this character. The Government has ample power under the War Measures Act to make regulations covering this point, and there is no reason why that should not be done. I cannot understand why the Government should come to Parliament with a Bill of this kind.

I want to ask in regard to a specific matter. Some time ago I had the honour of bringing to the attention of the House the operations of a gentleman named Merritt, who is collecting ostensibly for the supplying of aeroplanes to the Imperial authorities. I would like to know if the Government has any knowledge of this gentleman's operations, and if they are such as would be subject to registration under this Bill, and if the Government would give them registration.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: The question with reference to Colonel Merritt was asked yesterday. Colonel Merritt has certain views as to the advisability of building aeroplanes in Canada and presenting them to the Imperial Government. In conjunction with others who hold the same views he is attempting to raise money for the building of those aeroplanes. If he and others, men of wealth and of substance, consider it is a wise thing to do, and are willing to put their money into it, it is perfectly legitimate for them to do so. Colonel Merritt also had the idea that the Government might make a certain contribution towards this purpose, either by giving a number of aeroplanes, or in such other way as they might consider advisable. After discussing the matter with him, the Government came to the conclusion that their burdens in munitioning and equipping for war were quite as great as they could handle and they did not think it was their part to assist in helping to make this presentation of aeroplanes to the Imperial authorities. That is where the matter rests.

Mr. OLIVER: That is a very definite instance in point. The Minister of Trade and Commerce has made a very clear statement in regard to this matter, and I desire to ask the Minister of Finance if this enterprise of Colonel Merritt's is such as would require to be registered under this Bill.

Sir THOMAS WHITE: No, because it is not a war charity.

Mr. OLIVER: If the securing of aeroplanes for presentation to the Government is not a war charity, I am at a loss to understand the meaning of words.

Sir THOMAS WHITE: A war charity has for its object or among its objects the relief of suffering or distress or the supplying of needs or comforts to sufferers from the war, or to soldiers, returned soldiers, or their families or dependents, or any other charitable purpose connected with the present European war. The object of Colonel