

one of the clauses enacts that as soon as the war is over and the troops are demobilized the Act will be no more—that it will fall of itself. There is one thing we cannot forget, however. If future members are elected upon this military electoral vote they will continue to be the representatives of the people, but they will not represent the sentiments of the country. I would have no objection if it were provided that as soon as the war is ended the party in power, be it Conservative or Liberal, should immediately dissolve the House.

Hon. Mr. POPE: No.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY: Certainly, and call upon the people.

Hon. Mr. POPE: No.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY: My honourable friend does not understand why.

Hon. Mr. POPE: No.

Hon. Mr. CLORAN: Two to one that he does not.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY: He is not obliged to comprehend; it is sufficient that the other members of this House understand why. I do not see why any party should remain in power after having been elected in this way. I am not speaking for one party or the other; I am speaking for both parties. I say I do not see why any party that obtains power on a vote of this kind should remain in power. The Act ceases to have effect, and it is inequitable that the party elected under its provisions should remain in power. As a consequence, we must resort to other devices to keep in power people who have different feelings from those which are manifested to-day. I think even the honourable gentleman who interrupted a moment ago (Hon. Mr. Pope) will understand that.

If one may judge from the really scant attention the matter is receiving from the press, or at all events from the papers printed in the English language, it would seem doubtful if there is any realization at all of how the interests of the majority of the Canadian people, and indeed their rights, are being sacrificed by allowing to become the law of the land the extraordinary franchise legislation which is being crowded through Parliament with such unprecedented speed, and the effects of which on the liberties of the people are likely to become more and more pronounced each year for many years to come.

It is said that the number of persons who voted in the last Dominion election, in 1911,

totalled slightly over 1,300,000 for the whole of Canada, constituting probably about 60 per cent of the names on the voters' lists. Legislation has just been put through making it as certain as any event to happen can be that there will be recorded the votes of practically all of some 400,000 soldiers, including foreigners and minors, by providing a period of twenty-eight days in which the soldiers may exercise the franchise by means of ballots brought to them. How this has a tendency to make the soldiers' vote predominate will be realized when it is recalled that under ordinary circumstances probably 40 per cent of those entitled to vote at an election do not get to the polls.

In addition, and far more dangerous as regards the rights of ordinary Canadians, we have now under consideration the so-called War-time Elections Act, disfranchising a considerable number of the constituents of the present House of Commons, and, worse still—especially in eliminating the influence of the French Canadian minority—adding to the voters lists the wives, mothers, sisters and widows of the soldiers. The latter feature in practice really amounts to the same thing as giving each of some 400,000 soldiers two, three, four, or perhaps five or six votes. Thus at a moderate estimate there may be added to the voters' list anywhere from say 800,000 to 1,200,000 votes for the women relatives of soldiers—this too, it should be remembered, to supplement the votes of the male near relatives of soldiers who of their own right are already entitled to vote, or, allowing one for each soldier, which is quite a conservative estimate, making 400,000 more soldier-controlled votes. Thus there is a prospect of the soldiers and their relatives having upwards of 2,000,000 votes, compared with a total vote of only about 1,300,000 in the last election. It is an easy matter to test the effect of the proposed war franchise by applying it to a number of families that we know of from which members have enlisted in the army. In each case we find that at least two, three or four women relatives, and sometimes more, will be entitled to vote on account of the soldier member of the family. 2,000,000 soldier votes!—contemplate it. These figures are certainly startling in their possibilities, and the appalling results which may accrue should make all democratic people, especially the ever liberty-loving French Canadians, awake to some realization of the dangers ahead. For there can be no other meaning, even if the estimate given were cut in two, that once this legislation is