

doubted that the Allies would be victorious; and though Russia retired from the conflict just after the United States had come in, the result was never uncertain. I believe that I contributed my share to the work devolving upon me as a civilian. This being my state of mind and heart, I was nevertheless surprised to read that the Hon. Mr. Meighen stated, in a speech in Winnipeg some time in 1915, that he would bankrupt this country before he would allow Great Britain to go under. I was taken aback. I wondered if this was but an exaggerated figure of speech; and, in order to find out the speaker's probable state of mind, I tried to put myself in his place. To do so I imagined that I was the son or the grandson of a French settler in Algeria, and I asked myself what I would do on the day on which Germany invaded France. Would I feel that my obligations were the less because I was on one side of the Mediterranean and not on the other? I readily came to the conclusion that I would go forward without waiting for the call; and, if I did that, and offered my life to France, I would naturally give to it my last dollar. I then understood Mr. Meighen, and when my friends came to me asking if it was really true that the Government were disposed to go the length of bankrupting the country, I answered in the affirmative and explained that for the Anglo-Canadian Great Britain and Canada were but one and the same country. My friends pondered over this problem, and very often exclaimed in conclusion, "Oh, then, they are not really Canadians?" "No, not as completely as you are," was my reply.

And yet the attitude of all Anglo-Canadians was not the same. Voluntary enlistments were in inverse ratio to the number of years the people had been in this country. The first contingent, the first 33,000 men who were gathered at Valcartier, were typical of the situation at that moment. I remember that after they left a rumour went about that the French had not done their share. We started looking about to find how much truth there was in that rumour. It was exceedingly difficult to learn the exact proportions that went from each group, because in the declaration which the soldier signed there was no statement of his extraction or his race. Only lately the Minister of Militia stated in the other Chamber that it was impossible to say what was the contribution of each group. But Colonel Woods, of Quebec, a most respected citizen of that city, made an effort

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to find out the different origins of the 33,000 men of that contingent. He got this information based upon the next of kin. He came to Montreal and delivered a lecture at the Canadian Club, in which he stated that the Anglo-Canadian portion of this country need not throw stones at anybody, inasmuch as 28,000 of the 33,000 men of the first contingent were English-born, 4,000 Anglo-Canadian born, and 1,500 Canadians of French descent. In spite of those figures I can affirm that every Canadian, of whatever extraction, was most happy to see Canada entering this war, and most willing to help. As I have stated, the Minister of Militia himself is unable to declare what is the strength of the different groups of soldiers who go to make up the army of Canada, because their racial origins were not given by the soldiers.

We claim that, before conscription came into force, at least 25,000 men of French descent enlisted voluntarily for service abroad. That is no mean figure, considering the mental and physical unpreparedness of the people of my province. Let us discuss for a moment their mental unpreparedness for answering the call for service on the other side of the Atlantic—and here I come to the claim of my honourable friend from Compton that he was surprised during the war to find a different sentiment animating his neighbours from that which animated himself.

Just three years before the war there was a coalition called the Borden-Bourassa coalition, which carried the general election and brought the Borden Government into power. On what cry were the elections carried on in Quebec?

What enabled the coalition to elect twenty-seven members most of whom were nationalists? Most of those seats were carried by the cry of "No participation in Imperial wars outside of Canada." The idol of the French Canadian went down on that slogan. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who up to that moment had been unassailable, was defeated three years before the war broke out, on that cry—"No participation in Imperial wars outside of Canada." Not only were those members elected on that cry in Quebec, but it is well known that Mr. Bourassa was invited and pressed to go into certain constituencies in Ontario and affirm the same doctrine; and he did so. And I venture to affirm that the honourable gentleman from Compton owes his seat in this Chamber to this very cry, which carried twenty-seven seats in Quebec, and some also in the other provinces. And yet he