

session a great number of petitions containing hundreds of names, and certainly representing the views of thousands of people in this country, praying for the enactment of a law this session prohibiting the importation.

Mr. SPEAKER: I regret to have to interrupt the hon. member, but it is not in order for him to now discuss the question of prohibition. The resolution before us is with respect to the conserving of the products used in the manufacture of liquor.

Mr. J. J. HUGHES: I did not intend to take up much of the time of the House, and I think that what I have to say bears directly on the motion before the House. I was simply leading up to my reasons for supporting this motion, if not a wider one, and I should like to have the privilege of addressing the House for a few moments. I was saying that the Government has received a large number of petitions this year praying for the enactment of a law this session prohibiting the importation, sale and manufacture of intoxicating liquors in this country. If ever there was a time when this question should be considered it is now. Members of the Government especially the Minister of Finance (Sir Thomas White) and the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir George Foster), have held meetings in different parts of the country to explain to the people the gravity of the situation, and I have told the people that, sooner or later—and much sooner than many expect—we shall have to give up seventy-five per cent of our luxuries, and perhaps twenty-five per cent of necessities. Intoxicating liquors at their very best are certainly luxuries, and at their worst are one of the greatest evils from which the country suffers. I believe that public opinion at this time would sustain the Government in taking action along the lines suggested by this resolution, and in my humble judgment, will condemn the Government if something of the kind is not done during the present session. Last session Parliament passed an Act fixing very severe penalties for the carrying of liquor into prohibited provinces. I know that that Act has been violated extensively in regard to the province from which I come. I had a question upon the Order Paper early in the session, asking the Government if they were aware that the provisions of that Act had been violated by the carrying of intoxicating liquors into Prince Edward Island.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

[Mr. J. J. Hughes.]

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. gentleman (Mr. Hughes) should confine his remarks to the question before the Chair. We are not discussing the general question of prohibition—the resolution is a specific one against certain grains being used in the manufacture of intoxicating liquor.

Mr. J. J. HUGHES: I shall confine my remarks entirely to the subject you have indicated, Mr. Speaker. I say that at least the action proposed by this resolution would be justified, and more than justified, and that the people would approve such action by the Government. I believe that public opinion will not be met, and that a vast majority of the people will be dissatisfied, unless something of this kind is done.

Mr. D. D. McKENZIE (Cape Breton North): The hon. member (Mr. Devlin) who moved this resolution has put his case very strongly and clearly and has given the House sufficient data to justify the position he takes and the motion he has moved. If the only purpose in speaking were to give further information, it would not be necessary for me to occupy even a moment of the time of the House. But it might appear to be an expression of indifference on my part if I allowed the motion to go by without saying a word. I understand that this is a resolution that does not come to a division, but is made for the purpose of giving members of the House, and particularly members of the Government, an opportunity to express their opinion upon the subject. The figures given by the hon. member for Wright show that very large quantities of the very essentials of living are consumed in the manufacture of intoxicating liquors; and, while I am not fanatical on the subject, and have no desire to deprive any man of the right to take a drink when he so desires, I think it is time for us to deny ourselves such luxuries as intoxicating liquors and to take steps to stop their production. For, while the stoppage of production of intoxicants is not the object directly sought, the enforcement of the principle declared for in the resolution would have that effect. The direct object is two-fold—first, to prevent the use for other purposes of money which should go to the support of the people; and, second, to conserve for food purposes the grain which would otherwise be used in producing intoxicants. If any steps can be taken by the Government to make it certain