

assertions that I am making that the cost is going to be a heavy one; it is one that is going to be felt by every one of us and by every one of the free men and women in the other eleven nations that are banded together to do their share in this joint undertaking. What we shall be asking parliament to authorize will not be aid or assistance to anybody else. It will be something required by ourselves for the purpose of doing our part in building up this joint strength which is required to fulfil an undertaking that no one of us alone could fulfil and one that can be fulfilled only by the full co-operative efforts of all of us.

Only within the last few hours we read the report of a similar statement made in the parliament of Britain by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom as to the extent and the acceleration of the military effort they are going to make as their part of this upbuilding of our united strength. We know what is being contemplated by our neighbours to the south and we know what has been placed before the supreme commander by the governments of the other Atlantic nations. I am sure that the people of our country wish us to do our part in the upbuilding of that united strength which we hope will be a sufficient deterrent to prevent the necessity of winning a third world war.

To some sincere, patriotic Canadians it would appear that the first and most important thing to do would be to have in force in this country some form of selective service, some form of conscription of manpower, to bring large numbers of armed forces in being and to place them in the field ready to meet an enemy. There are others who believe, with equal sincerity, that to resort, at the present time, to compulsory military service would be disastrous to the Canadian economy. The view of the government—and it is my own—does not coincide with either of those extreme points of view. My attitude in this respect has been, I realize, a source of some uneasiness to some good Canadians throughout this country because of my race, the part of Canada from which I come, my religious beliefs, and so forth. But I think I can assure them that they are quite mistaken, and that is something those who are not my friends or supporters in my own native province have long realized.

I do not know how many hon. members had brought to their attention an article which was published in *Le Devoir* on October 24, 1950, in which their readers were being warned against me because of the facts to which this article referred. The writer recalled that:

Conscription is an issue one does not broach without distaste or even without disgust. For a

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quarter of a century, Quebec Liberals exploited it before making it a part of their program. Conservatives used it as an instrument of hatred to set other provinces against Quebec where so-called equality of sacrifice was not accepted.

That is underscored in the article. Then it went on:

The French Canadian Liberal leaders of 1939 had an anti-conscription record. Lapointe and Cardin had formally committed themselves hundreds of times in public. Mr. King had had to give them pledges. Today, the situation is altogether different. Mr. Louis St. Laurent was elected in 1942 without concealing his opinions. He has not changed since. His convictions are all the more dangerous for being more honest and generally more sincere. Mr. St. Laurent will resist a conscription measure only so long as he believes it will be inadvisable or ineffective. In principle he has no objection to it.

Then they go on and say:

His policy leads straight in that direction.

Well, I was not at all offended at the terms of that article. So far as I am concerned, this is not a matter which can or should be decided on sentimental grounds. It is one which should be decided on its merits, and strictly on its merits, and with regard to what will make for the efficiency and the effectiveness of our contribution to the joint efforts that have to be put forth by the twelve nations banded together.

Though I do not go along with *Le Devoir*, I do not go along either with the *Globe and Mail*. The *Globe and Mail* on January 31, only yesterday, said that what was wanted was a declaration that parliament would be asked to give approval to a plan for national selective service. It said:

Selective service probably will involve conscription for the fighting forces. If it does there will be a national sense of equity.

Then it goes on:

Through two wars the people of Quebec, and on their account Roman Catholics generally, were blamed for the rejection of military conscription.

It continues:

Religion can no longer be made the excuse for failing to do what must be done, and sharing as equitably as possible the burdens of the doing. Foremost among the organized foes of the communist conquest is the Roman Catholic church.

This is not a matter of religion, nor a matter to be decided on the basis of religion, and I deprecate appeals of that kind for or against national selective service from any quarter. Let us be men, and let us face realities and do what we think will be the most efficient and the most effective as our contribution to the upbuilding of those international forces. It will be for us to determine what is the total volume of the effort this nation can contribute to this pool of combined forces, and it will be for us and for our partners together to determine what is the best way in which each nation can make its most effective contribution to that pool of joint strength.