

the Government. We had under discussion a few evenings ago an item of nearly \$4,000,000 passed by this Parliament in defiance of the judgment of Sir Walter Cassels, judge of the Exchequer Court of Canada. These matters the electors who are now disfranchised by the Bill before us will be unable to vote on.

There is another question in which the people are vitally interested and upon which they should be permitted to express their opinion. I refer to the failure of the Government to deal with the high cost of living and the fixing of the price of food products—matters which have been dealt with successfully by the governments of every other belligerent country. The Government hope to get by with everything done by them against the public interest, every failure on their part to properly perform their duties, by this legislation under which they purpose disfranchising 50,000 people in this country. All these things are done under the guise of war measures—all because we are at war. When the ex-Minister of Public Works resigned his portfolio on August 20, the following statement appeared in the newspapers:

While Mr. Rogers was favourable to the original scheme of coalition government and to conscription, he is known to very strongly oppose the idea of union government on the lines now proposed. There was also a marked divergence of opinion on the question of disfranchising citizens of enemy nationality. The former minister insisted that it should be done. Sir Robert Borden would not agree to such a proposition, which he characterized as "ruthless."

This legislation shows that the member for Winnipeg (Mr. Rogers) is more powerful outside the Cabinet than he was inside. He failed to convince the Prime Minister that this ruthless legislation should be carried by the Government through Parliament, but he has since succeeded in getting the Prime Minister to introduce it into the House. It is generally suspected that the resignation of the ex-Minister of Public Works does not place him very far from the realm of influence with the Government; it is the general view that he is as competent to-day and as influential with the Government as ever he was. The ex-Minister of Public Works resigned because the Prime Minister would not give his consent to the disfranchising Act. We have now before us the ruthless legislation which the Prime Minister had refused to accede to, but which has been acceded to since the ex-Minister of Public Works left the Government.

Mr. D. B. NEELY (Humboldt): Mr. Speaker, it is not my intention to repeat in substance the arguments that I advanced against this Bill the other day on its second reading—arguments having mainly to do with the injustice accorded by the Government to a large number of the citizens of Canada, particularly of western Canada, who are to be disfranchised by this Bill. This afternoon I want to view the question from another standpoint: that of the breach of faith on the part of this Government with the members on this side of the House, especially those from western Canada, who supported the Military Service Act, which is now the law of the country.

I am sorry that the Prime Minister is not in his seat, because I wish directly to charge him with breach of faith. The Military Service Bill was carried with the aid of twenty-seven Liberals who voted with the Government. In voting as they did, the western Liberals voted as representatives of the people whom this Bill now proposes to disfranchise, namely, naturalized British subjects in Canada of alien enemy birth or extraction. If the Government thought that we were casting an honest and sincere vote on that occasion, then they are open to the charge of having broken faith with those who supported them on the Military Service Bill. We by our votes stood sponsors for the people whom the Government now proposes to disfranchise. The Government are declaring to the country that they have no faith in

5 p.m. the word or the vote of the men who stood sponsor for this large class of citizens in western Canada. That being the case, I should like to have asked the Prime Minister, had he been in his seat, what was the reason of this change of front. So far as I know, not a member on this side of the House from western Canada who voted for the Military Service Bill has been consulted as to the effect the legislation now under consideration would have either upon their own constituents or upon the people as a whole. I should like to hear from the Prime Minister the reason why in this measure he casts an insinuation and a slur upon the honesty and sincerity of members on this side of the House who voted for the Military Service Bill and who at the same time stood sponsors for the class of citizens whom this present Bill proposes to disfranchise? Was it because of certain resolutions that were adopted at the Winnipeg Liberal convention on the 7th and 8th of August last that the Government have made this change of front? Some very im-