

The second condition which the country was entitled to ask from the Government, the Premier continued, was that it should not permit the burdens of the country to be increased by what was called profiteering, as distinguished from profit. Profiteering was unfair in peace; in war it was an outrage. This was why the Government had taken action to restrict profits and proposed to deal very drastically with unfair profiteering in food.

I contend that that is the ideal that the Government here should aspire to achieve. The plain people are not going to be content any longer with the mere promise of an income tax a year hence. They are not going to be content with the mere appointment of a food controller; they demand action, they are entitled to it and I hope they will get it. In so far as the Bill is concerned and the principles thereof, that is about all I have to say.

In regard to the referendum proposed by my honoured leader, I am of the opinion that wartime is not the best time to submit a question of this kind to the people. I am also of the opinion that it would be practically impossible to secure the votes of the soldiers on such a measure, and I am unable to support it on the second reading of this Bill. In my humble judgment, the soldiers are more entitled to express their views in regard to it than many who are at home. Some may say that the member for West Middlesex is deserting his leader and his party. But in the Liberal party a difference of opinion on a temporary policy is not a desertion. The question of voluntary or compulsory service has never been an issue in Canada dividing the leaders or the two great parties from each other. The matter has never before arisen and I pray God it may never have to arise again.

My honoured leader recognizes the principles of the party he has so nobly led in the interests of Canada and instead of trying to persuade his followers to his view on this matter, he has said privately, and publicly in this House, that each of them should make up his own mind as he sees the right. I honour him the more for that and therefore more closely adhere to him as leader and as the exponent of the great permanent principles of Liberalism. His leadership along these lines has proven an enduring benefit and inspiration to this country, on account of the courage, sincerity and lofty patriotism it has always breathed. Recent references have been made to him and his countrymen by hon. members of this House. My leader has been designated as the "Lamb of Quebec" and it has been hinted that his policy in this case is to win elections and not to win the war.

[Mr. Ross.]

Mr. Speaker, I resent the designation and I repudiate the motives assigned to my honoured leader by the hon. member who made them. "The Lamb of Quebec"—The only application this designation has to my honoured leader is in the fact that, while for forty-five years he has been in the public service of this country, and the white light of publicity that beats upon greatness has been upon him, no one dared charge that his public and private life have not been as white as wool. "The Lamb of Quebec," rather Mr. Speaker, "The Lion of Quebec"—of Canada—and one of the great lions of the Empire. Was my honoured leader a lamb in 1896, when he fought his own people, in order that provincial rights might be established in Manitoba? Was he the lamb of Quebec when, at the Imperial Conference in England, he stood up and fought for Canadian autonomy in the face of the most strenuous opposition from Imperial and Colonial statesmen, whose judgments were dazzled by sentimental visions of false Imperialism which would not have stood the shock of this world war in the splendid manner the present union of affection has done? Was he the lamb of Quebec in 1911, when he had opposed to him all that conglomeration of wealthy, selfish, self-seeking interests and prejudices and in addition many of his compatriots on account of his loyalty to Britain, and stood up for a Canadian navy and for a fair deal for the people of Canada? No, Mr. Speaker, his attitude as a Canadian has ever been leonine and his conduct lion-hearted. Epigrams are not always arguments. Sarcasm is not always logic. If the hon. members I have mentioned truly desire to know the place my honoured leader holds in the history of this country, I would commend them to his life written by Sir John Willison, a man who has probably done more in the last ten years, except Bourassa and Lavergne, to read this country asunder than any man in Canada, and for which dis-service he must have been knighted by the present Government, because he has rendered no service to Canada that I have been able to discover. Let them read that life. They should believe what its author says; the hon. member for Frontenac (Mr. Edwards) has been preaching its author's doctrine ever since I entered this House. And, if in times of peace there ever was in any country a greater romance—no, not a romance, but an epic than that of the struggle of my honoured leader and his Liberal friends