

crop, and some other crops were light, and, even so, the required labour was not easily obtained. In the season that lies ahead, there are prospects of greater crops and of greater demand for crops, for foodstuffs and for our munitions of war, and the farmers are already wondering what plans will be evolved so that labour may be available when it is required. They know of the registration. I do not think they know of what the government calls its policy of "national selective service". They know that industry is drawing away men and women by the lure of better wages and steady work, and they are anxious.

The government's efforts at recruiting for active service have been shrouded in some secrecy so far as total numbers by units and by provinces are concerned, except that in November last the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Ralston) submitted figures which showed that they were some distance below requirements; and now we have the sorry story, told by the minister on the last day of the 1941 session, that when he required to find in an emergency fewer than 2,000 trained men, some 130 with insufficient training had to be sent.

I do not suppose that I am singular in receiving continuous requests for advice as to how a man most desirous of helping in the war effort should get into touch with work he could do, and the only answer that one has been able to give is the address of the director of services. In the earlier months of the war we had the voluntary service registration bureau, and we were never able to get any information as to how that bureau functioned. There was an occasion, I remember, when it was intimated that the number of these applicants had reached five figures, but we were never able to get an answer to the question of how many had been put to desirable work for which they were suited. We have never been able to get an answer to the question of what percentage of applicants have received employment. The whole question of the man fitted for work lacking direction as to how he shall get into contact with that work, is still to be solved.

A blacksmith of my acquaintance was asked after the registration whether he was prepared to go back to his trade. He was not following his trade at the time. He said that he would be glad to. He heard nothing more; and then, as the work on which he was engaged, in an irrigation district, came to an end, he wrote, informing the authorities that he would be free the following month and would go to work at his trade if he was required. He was not seeking a job; he had occupation; but he wanted to do his bit. He was instructed to go to

Vancouver and present himself in a shipyard. He drove the three hundred miles at his own expense, and he found that men were being laid off, not taken on. He went to other shipyards and found the same condition. He went to the labour office, and in that office they were astonished that he should have ever been instructed to find his way to Vancouver because he was needed to do certain work. So he, a disappointed man, returned home the three hundred miles at his own expense. He was wanting to help the war effort. Add that instance to many others of men who have mechanical training, who want to make parts in connection with contracts, who want to feel they are doing their bit, and imagine their feelings when told that the government has been impeded in carrying out its policy of national selective service by a controversy concerning commitments. Imagine the feeling in that blacksmith's district when he came home and it got around that that was what he had suffered when he, hoping to make use of his talents and his training in work, found at the end of a three hundred mile journey that he was not wanted; and imagine how that spreads around that fertile field of depression, among the many men in this country who are just waiting to be directed so that their skill and their talents shall be made use of.

This government was elected in March, 1940, by a considerable majority with a mandate of the people to get on with the job. Compulsory service was not an issue at that election, though the Prime Minister says it was. It did not prevent the government from making the only use I know of, to that date, of the registration, and applying compulsion to the training of young men of certain age classes, first for a thirty-day period, and then for a four-month period. It has not hampered the government in applying compulsion to those young men by retaining them in the reserve army. But note that the speech from the throne says that the government's efforts are impeded by its commitments, and it holds that, to set aside those commitments and get on with the total war effort, even though the facts which we face are completely different from what they were when the commitments were made, would savour of dictatorship.

Therefore the government is going to hold a plebiscite, and the people are to be asked, "Will you release us from our hampering commitment?" The government has been the custodian of the facts; it must of necessity control what we are told. It has released what it has seen fit, and the facts connected with our needs, if we are to wage total war, have not been very plentiful to us in this house. Would not a reasonable reply to the