

God gives me health and strength, is to stay in the position I am in at the present time until this war is won. Then, if circumstances warrant, the people will be given their full rights and powers to decide as to what administration they may wish to have in office during the next parliament, whether they wish the present administration to be returned to office or some other to take its place.

I have not forgotten the fact that there is a constitutional limitation upon the duration of a parliament. But this parliament may continue, I believe, until June of next year, if that should be necessary—the war continuing, meanwhile. And, short of that, I repeat it is the intention of this administration, with the cooperation of members of parliament generally, to carry on with the prosecution of the war to the utmost limit of our power.

Mr. GRAYDON: May I ask the Prime Minister one question?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Yes.

Mr. GRAYDON: If I understood him correctly, on another occasion he said he was opposed to any extension of the life of parliament; is that so?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Yes, I am opposed to parliaments extending their own terms of office. I think one of the greatest mistakes made in this country was the extension by one parliament of its own term of office. I cannot say what situation might exist a year or more hence, at which time it might be necessary for parliament carefully to weigh all aspects of the situation. But, certainly, unless there are very strong reasons to the contrary, I would wish to see no extension of the term of parliament, and to see the people secured in their full rights to return to this House of Commons for the period allotted under the constitution the government they wish to represent them.

I have made this statement mainly in the hope hon. members will realize that so far as possible their first duty is to cooperate with the government in getting on with war measures. I am sure they will so regard the situation.

Before saying a further word, however, I should like to join in what has been said by the leader of the opposition respecting our armed forces, what we in Canada think of our fighting men and the part they have taken in the war. It is difficult to realize that to-day some of the men who are serving overseas have spent no less than five of their Christmas seasons away from home. If one stops to think what that means in the way of privation to men who have the great duties

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

and responsibilities which all of them have, one will appreciate what is owing to these men. I do not confine my remarks to the men who have been longest in the forces—naturally they are very much in our minds—but I say that this parliament of Canada is prouder than words can express of the manner in which the men and women in the armed forces of Canada have borne their part in this titanic struggle.

I do not speak merely of the growth of the forces. We know how the navy has expanded, as well as the army and the air force. We know what has been done in the way of the production of munitions and supplies of all kinds. I am not thinking of quantities or numbers; I am thinking of individual human lives and of what each life in the fighting forces of Canada to-day represents in the way of personal hardship endured and service given to our country.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): And sacrifice.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: And sacrifice. I was coming to that in just a moment. I should like those who are in the armed forces to-day, whether they are serving at sea, in the air or on land, to know that they are first and foremost in the minds of the Canadian people. We want them to know that we are proud of their skill, of their endurance, of their achievements, and that we intend to see that they are not disappointed in the backing which they will expect to receive from the people's representatives in the House of Commons and members of the Senate of their country.

I have not the time to-day to go into many of the matters to which my hon. friend has referred. I agree with him that it is desirable that we should seek to reform in some particulars some of the things to which perhaps we have grown too accustomed. As my hon. friend has frankly stated, one of these is the length of speeches. I gladly accept his challenge made this afternoon and would say at once that I intend to make only a few remarks before concluding, except on one subject about which I am obliged to speak at a little greater length. I should like to see this House of Commons get down to business just as quickly as it possibly can. We have a heavy legislative programme.

In connection with the carrying out of our programme, it has been suggested that the rules of the house should be revised. As the leader of the opposition has pointed out, the government has decided to have a committee appointed immediately to undertake a revision of the rules and procedure. It is true that I