

mentary legislation introduced to prevent these people from being disfranchised?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: My hon. friend from North Waterloo (Mr. Weichel) put forward the question solely with regard to naturalization. We do not intend to alter the Bill already presented to the House. As the persons alluded to naturally feel that their status as citizens in this country has been affected by the fact that they have not been naturalized, although they have in the past exercised the rights and fulfilled the duties of British citizenship, it seems a proper and reasonable course, and a course which would be appreciated by them, if that divergence from the policy of the past to which I have alluded should now be undertaken. I entirely concur in what my hon. friend from North Waterloo has said as to the splendid efforts of these citizens of German descent in the province of Ontario in sustaining and assisting the Patriotic Fund. I very well remember that in the first appeal made on behalf of the Canadian Patriotic Fund in Canada, the citizens of Kitchener made it a point that they should surpass in their proportionate contributions any city or town in Canada. My recollection is that they pretty well succeeded in doing so. We have every appreciation of the loyalty and devotion thus displayed, and we believe that the course which I have indicated is no more than is just and fair under the circumstances.

Mr. J. G. TURRIFF (Assiniboia): Since the question of conscription was first brought into this House a few months ago, I have been endeavouring to treat all these matters in connection with winning the war as free as I possibly could of partisanship. It is a somewhat difficult position, especially as this afternoon I was made the subject of an attack by my friends on this side of the House. However, I do not pay very much attention to that. The question we are now discussing is the Franchise Act, and I look on the Franchise Act as more or less connected with winning the war.

Mr. PROULX: Winning the election, you mean.

Mr. TURRIFF: It is not necessary for any one to put words into my mouth. I know what I want to say, and I propose saying it in my own way. If I were disposed to do so, I might say that I think the winning of the election will have a great deal to do with the winning of the war. However, the question we are discussing to-

[Mr. Pugsley.]

night is the Franchise Act. I do not agree with all the features of the Franchise Bill

now before the House. I cannot bring myself to believe that disfranchising anybody is a good policy or is a necessary policy for winning the war. During the local election held a short time ago in Saskatchewan, that question was up rather strongly, brought about principally by my hon. friend from North Simcoe (Mr. Currie). I took a strong stand then against disenfranchising anybody, and I do not propose to change my views on the subject, and on this occasion, in spite of the ill-natured remarks—as I take them to be—of my hon. friend from Humboldt (Mr. Neely) this afternoon, I intend to support his amendment. During this debate I have on two occasions voted in favour of the closure, and I did so feeling absolutely certain that as we are right at the closing of the term of Parliament, unless the closure were adopted this Bill would never have got through at all, and there would be no Election Act whatever, and we would be in a state of confusion. Judging by the bright speeches which have been made during the last two or three weeks under closure, better debates have taken place than when every member was given all the latitude he chose to take. My judgment is that many men on both sides of the House on this occasion have put as much into twenty minutes as would be put into an hour's and very often into two hours' discussion without closure. It seems to me when the next Parliament meets it would not be a bad idea, whichever party is in power, to take up the question of curtailing discussions in this House, and so shorten the sessions, that we may not be here six, or seven, or eight months.

This Bill, as I look at it, is more or less of a party Bill. It could not be otherwise. It is brought in by one party. I think I am fair in saying that it is introduced more for winning the war than for any advantage to the Conservative party, because if my hon. friends on the other side of the House think the Bill will help them win elections for many years to come in the West, they are labouring under a delusion. However, whose fault is it that the Bill is brought in as a party measure? I think it is only fair to say that the right hon. leader of the Government has made every effort to have a union or national Government to bring in this measure. I feel that a much better measure could have been prepared by a union or national Government. At the same time, I do not think it is the fault of