

go to the front. We all know that it is as important to feed a soldier as to give him a rifle. It is as important that he should have suitable clothing, shells and guns, as it is that he should be there in the firing line. He cannot be provided with food, equipment, and shells, unless men are left at home to do their part. There are men in this country who are not sufficiently robust to go to the front, but who can work here. Under the Military Service Bill we can select them. The people of Quebec, under the Militia Act, since 1868 have been bound to serve in our army sent beyond Canada, according to the opinion of the Chief Justice of the highest court in this country. So it is in any country in the world that makes any claim to civilization. The state must be protected, and that means protection to the individual. The individual must bear his responsibility, and, if need be, save the state. Under this Militia Act, we are bound to serve the state, if we are between the ages of 18 and 60.

I digressed a little from the question of labour. I think it my duty to say that the best elements in labour to-day in Canada are in favour of conscription, and of going to the front. What have they been doing for their brethren who have gone to the front? They have been paying thousands and thousands of dollars in insurance premiums from time to time when their brothers were away; and, when the breadwinner had sacrificed his life for the liberties of the country, they have seen to it that his widow and fatherless children did not want. Does any man mean to tell me that men of that character are in favour of abandoning their brethren at the front to-day? No, God forbid. I know the workingmen of this country too well to believe anything of that kind. I repeat that the best elements in the working classes of Canada to-day are in favour of conscription, because they believe it to be necessary, in order to back up our men at the front.

There are on record some letters from representative labour men in the United States and in England. Mr. Gompers, who was appointed by the President of the United States as chairman of a committee to assist the National Council of Defence, wrote to a number of workingmen and asked them to join in assisting the President in this great war. John F. Curley answered:

I will gladly serve, and to the best of my ability do my share for my country in the time of her need.

[Mr. Crothers.]

William Green, secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers of America, wrote that he would gladly join the committee and do his best for it. Andrew C. Hughes said that the members of the Coopers' International Union stood ready for service at any point designated by the Government. Thomas McNeill was proud to join in the defence of the country. James Lord said:

Real patriotism can only exist with the conservation of human liberties, and when the people of our nation can read the situation in this spirit, the things we all hold dear will not perish, no matter what situation or crisis may confront us. I will be at the meeting at the appointed time.

On May 27, the British Workers' League adopted the following resolution:

We hope that this manifestation of popular sympathy and solidarity on the part of the masses of London's citizens will help to silence the few weak and sinister voices that have been raised in pleas for a premature and dastardly peace—a peace whereby all the sacrifices and all the courage of your brothers and ours would be wasted. We have lived through hours as dark with impending disaster as any that nations have ever suffered, and now that the sun of victory is dawning on our horizon, the masses of the British people are more determined than ever to be worthy of their dead, to be worthy of their past, and with you to be no unworthy architects of a future in which war and tyranny shall be banished from the world for all time.

I believe that the wage-earners of this country are in favour of continuing the war and of backing up our boys at the front. They are, therefore, in favour of the application of compulsory service, as there is no other way of backing up our soldiers.

Mr. VERVILLE: How long after United States declared war was this famous committee named?

Mr. CROTHERS: I could not tell my hon. friend. Perhaps he knows.

Mr. VERVILLE: I am asking my hon. friend.

Mr. CROTHERS: My hon. friend does not know; neither do I. I know that on May 27 last this resolution was adopted.

Mr. GRAHAM: It could not have been very long after war was declared.

Mr. CROTHERS: Why?

Mr. GRAHAM: Because the United States declared war only recently.

Mr. CROTHERS: This resolution was adopted by the British Workmen's League.

Mr. VERVILLE: I was asking about the United States. How long after war was de-