

is pressure of their own business, demanding that they leave the government's service and go back to their own business, that is not good enough.

Mr. RALSTON: I do not know what my hon. friend means. He referred to the master-general of the ordnance, and I wish to take issue with him if he reflects upon Mr. Chester. I do not know what he means by "not being good enough."

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): I mean that the explanation is not good enough. It does not satisfactorily inform us why a man should leave the service of the country at this critical time. I am not casting reflections on any one. Just a few weeks ago a young man, a sergeant in one of the units, was given an opportunity to go to England with a draft that was going to reinforce one of the regiments now in the old country. That young man had a business. I went with him on the day that he went down and turned the key in his door and said that business would have to wait for the duration. If he can afford to do that, so can others.

Mr. GOLDING: What was his business?

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): He runs a store, which is as important to him as the business of an executive is to that executive.

Mr. GOLDING: It may not be as important as Mr. Duncan's business.

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): At the present time nothing can be more important to Canada and Canada's war effort than the production of necessary supplies whereby men in the fighting forces are enabled to carry on the war successfully, and if there is sufficient need for these men to be here, and if they were doing a good job, there is no reason why they should leave.

Mr. RALSTON: What my hon. friend has said rather confirms the impression I received that he was making a reflection upon these gentlemen. Mr. Chester came at my earnest request in order that he might give his organizing ability to the reorganization of the department of the master-general of the ordnance. He came, as announced in the newspapers at the time, for a limited period, with the consent of the directors of Hudson's Bay company, who could not spare him indefinitely owing to the fact that their president in London, Mr. Ashley Cooper, is himself engaged in connection with war work there, and Mr. Chester had to take on an added load in the business. He came on that understanding, and I gave him my undertaking that I would make provision for him to return. He stayed a month longer than was expected.

He is engaged in work in connection with war activities, besides running his business and providing employment and supplies. I say to my hon. friend that it does not lie in the mouth of anyone to suggest that this gentleman is not doing his duty or that he should stay here indefinitely when, as a matter of conscience, and having regard to his duty elsewhere, he feels it incumbent upon him to return to his work after having done a fine job for us. He fulfilled more than the contract he made with the country and he and his company have more than done their share in connection with our war effort.

The Minister of National Defence for Air is not here, but I was present when the arrangement was made with Mr. Duncan, and if I remember rightly, Mr. Duncan was to come for three months. I believe he stayed for eight or nine months, and everyone knows that he stayed at a time when the president of his company, Mr. T. A. Russell, was very ill. But Mr. Russell, with his well known tenacity and indomitable spirit, endeavoured to carry on until death overtook him and Mr. Duncan had to go back. That company is engaged in the extensive production of war materials for the country. Tribute has been paid to the magnificent contribution of Mr. Duncan and the company to the war effort, and my hon. friend therefore is not justified in anything that carries the slightest reflection upon him because he is not staying for the duration of the war.

Mr. HOWE: Perhaps I should speak with regard to Mr. Campbell's position. Mr. Campbell came to Ottawa as chairman of the war purchasing board and he remained throughout the duration of that board. The government had made preparations for eventually turning the war purchasing board into a department of government and Mr. Campbell was invited to take a position in the Department of Munitions and Supply. He stated at the time that his work at the Ford plant had expanded so rapidly and that company had taken on such heavy commitments that he felt he could render a better service to the country by going back to Windsor in order to look after the organization of his own company than he could by remaining with the department of munitions. I do not see in that anything that reflects upon him, nor is there any reflection upon the department.

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): There is no intention on my part to reflect upon anyone, but I do say that it is a question not where a man's personal inclination lies but where he can render the greatest service to the country.