

I doubt whether any political party with traditions in Canada, which understands the place of the Dominion of Canada in the British empire, and which desires British institutions to continue in force in this country in the future, would place such a policy as that before the people of Canada, with the intention of putting it immediately into effect. I say that, knowing something of the history of this country, knowing something of the traditions of political parties, knowing something of what they stand for, knowing something of their relationship to the representative, responsible, democratic institution of government under which we live. No; the only kind of government which could bring that kind of policy into effect in Canada at present, the only kind of government which would undertake to do so, would be the government with no political past and no desire to have a political future. There are many other things that such a government would have to decide. It is because of those other things that I would oppose it.

There is only one condition under which responsible party government in Canada would bring in conscription for overseas service, and that would be a condition under which, if they did not do so, the democratic institution of government would be threatened with destruction. Under such conditions probably there is not a man in the house who would not support a government which took action in that direction.

If I had time I would go into another matter which is of great importance at this time, but I shall discuss it in committee. It has to do with the distribution of man power as it affects the number of people in Canada at the present time. But I do wish just for a moment to discuss a speech which has been quoted in this house on a number of occasions.

Mr. STIRLING: On a point of order, if the hon. member has finished dealing with my leader, may I say with regret that I must disagree to his continuing for more than forty minutes, after Your Honour's ruling of the other day.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): The minister began at 3.20.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have noted the time as 3.20.

Mr. GARDINER: Yes, that is the time I noted on the clock.

Mr. STIRLING: Then I regret to say that the clocks do not agree, because the hon. member began at 3.14 by the clock opposite me.

An hon. MEMBER: Get yours fixed.

Mr. GARDINER: I regret to have to disagree with my hon. friend, because usually we do not have occasion to do so.

Mr. ROWE: The clock on your side is as bad as your war policy.

Mr. GARDINER: I should be allowed the time this interruption has taken.

Mr. STIRLING: The hon. member has already gone three minutes over his time.

Mr. SPEAKER: The time I took was 3.20, and the hon. member will have concluded at 4 o'clock.

Mr. GARDINER: I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that I should be allowed an extra minute. If that cannot be allowed, then I submit that hon. members should be prevented from using any of the time of the member who has the floor.

On May 17, 1941, I am reported, and properly so, to have said that it would be possible in Canada to raise and maintain a fighting force over a three-year period requiring three-quarters of a million men. I submit to the house that the plans now presented to it by the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Ralston) provide for such an army. There are something over 600,000 up to the end of the present fiscal year, and 750,000 would provide us with the necessary troops to carry on during a three-year period of time, if the troops at the front were in action. Under these circumstances we have the possibility of carrying out in Canada the present policy in relation to the army, without conscription.

To conclude, I should like to deal for a moment or two with the statements made by the hon. member for Richelieu-Verchères (Mr. Cardin), the ex-minister of public works. I believe I am expressing the view of every hon. member when I say that we regret he found it necessary to resign at this time. I belong to the west.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has spoken forty minutes.

Some hon. MEMBERS: No, no.

Mr. SPEAKER: There would have to be unanimous consent to exceeding the forty-minute limit.

Mr. J. G. DIEFENBAKER (Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) upon the consistency of his attitude toward military service overseas. That was his attitude in 1917; that is his attitude to-day. Up to the present time the only two ministers who have spoken in this debate on behalf of the government have been the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie