

selves accordingly. Perhaps it may have to be reorganized, but an international body is absolutely necessary. We shall, however, have to see to it that the pledge of all members is fulfilled and lived up to.

This is a war parliament. This government has received a mandate to lead the country in this struggle for freedom and peace. Up to this stage of my remarks apparently everyone has agreed with me, but I am afraid I am now entering another field where there may be some disagreement. Suggestions have been made in this house by hon. members for whom I have the greatest respect, and similar suggestions have appeared in certain newspapers, that we should change the complexion of this government and have what is glorified under the name of "national government." I feel it my duty to express my views frankly and respectfully, but firmly. Perhaps I am more at liberty to speak than other members of the government because I would gladly give up my own place to someone else if that were the better course to pursue. I feel sure that those who know me well, realize that it is only a sense of duty that keeps me in the position I now hold.

Mr. Asquith has said that democracy implies that the will of the people must prevail. I ask in all sincerity: Is not the present government the government which Canada said only a few months ago that she wanted during the war? Indeed, every one of us has been accepted and endorsed by the people as part of the government for the purpose of carrying on the war. This parliament is not a pre-war parliament as were the parliaments of Great Britain and New Zealand. This government is not a pre-war government. The war policies of the government were submitted to the people. The issue was fought squarely. The people were asked unequivocally whether they wanted this government to lead the country during the war or whether they wanted an aggregation of best brains, as has been suggested by some newspapers and given by my good friend, the leader of the opposition.

Every candidate of the official opposition was a candidate for a national government. Not only could that be seen in the newspapers of the time; but if hon. members will consult the *Parliamentary Guide* just issued, they will see that every one of my hon. friends opposite from the leader down is described as "N.G.", meaning "national government". Even the hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Green), for whom I have the greatest respect and affection, is referred to in that way.

Mr. GREEN: I was elected as a Conservative.

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): The hon. member is referred to as "N.G.", like all the others.

Mr. MacNICOL: May I ask the minister—

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): Yes, my hon. friend is "N.G." too.

Mr. MacNICOL: Is that red book published by the government?

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): No.

Mr. MacNICOL: Whoever put "N.G." after my name had no business doing it. I ran as a Conservative.

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): Did my hon. friend protest before March 26?

Mr. MacNICOL: I ran as a Conservative.

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): I congratulate my hon. friend.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): So did I.

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): I congratulate my hon. friend. So the whole thing was a joke?

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): This is a burlesque.

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): Yes, a burlesque, and the people of Canada thought it was. I hope my hon. friends will not resent anything that I say. Thirty-nine of them were elected, but there were 206 "N.G.s" who were defeated by the people of Canada.

Mr. MacNICOL: I increased my majority.

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): Can my hon. friend say that the people of Canada want a national government? How can that be said without some degree of comedy? Listen to what was said in the press at the time. A leading newspaper, the *Winnipeg Free Press* had this to say on March 27, 1940:

The government support is now so general and national in complexion that, while it may bear the Liberal label, it is, by every test that counts, a "national government." It has in some respects lost the right to call itself Liberal, for hundreds of thousands of the votes cast in its favour came from electors who are not, and never will be, Liberals at all. They were impelled to vote as they did because they resented the kind of campaign that had been waged and because (as they had every right to do) they believed Mr. King and his colleagues when they announced their watchword of "no politics for the duration of the war".

Here is another one, also from the *Winnipeg Free Press*, written on March 13 last:

The maintenance of an effective and powerful opposition is the best guarantee a democracy has of dynamic and efficient administration. To destroy or weaken that unnecessarily by the formation of a national government is unwise and dangerous, for no political deadlock has emerged and no major issue has arisen in regard