

and we are fighting against autocracy—at least, I thought so from the outset of the war. The only reason that I have gone into the war, or encouraged any one else to go into it, was that I considered we were fighting for everything that is worth fighting for, namely, the downfall of autocracy and the preservation of human liberty. If we are gradually handing over to gentlemen, no matter how much confidence we have in them, the rights and powers which belong to the people, and these gentlemen do not wish to appear before their constituents and seek re-election, I fear we are following in the footsteps of those who laid the foundation in Germany of the condition which made it possible for the Kaiser to become the autocrat he is in that country.

Thousands of free governments have been established from time to time in the history of the world, yet, one by one they have disappeared until, as I have said, only two that have lived for a hundred years or over remain. This, I maintain, is due to such Acts as that which we are practically carrying out here to-day—the policy of surrendering the rights for which people have fought for generations to an autocracy. We are making an autocracy not merely in regard to matters overseas, but an autocracy to handle matters which properly belong to the people and for the people. I have met gentlemen representing certain forms of church, and gentlemen representing autocratic forms of government, who maintain that the people of any community are unfit for free government and will not take an interest in matters, and so they justify Parliament in handing over control of everything to two or three members of the Government. You might as well make the choice of those to control public affairs depend upon the result of a game of poker. I have pointed out that in the House of Commons we are not representatives of the people, and do not exercise our proper functions in this House, but trust to others to do the business of the country. People claim, therefore, that the only proper form of Government is autocracy in state or church as the case may be, and they proceed accordingly.

We have a great many lovers of constitutional liberty, who say that in times of peace the constitutional government is all right, but in time of war you must have autocratic government. In England Lloyd George and Bonar Law are managing the affairs of the nation to-day, and why? Not because of a union government or a coalition government, but because it was found

that in the early days of the war action was what was wanted. The red tape was found to be a hindrance to a successful prosecution of affairs, so that at the beginning of the war Britain was found practically defenceless. She could not send her men and munitions to the front to meet the tremendous preparation made by Germany, and little was being done to meet that emergency, until Lloyd George Bonar Law, Lord Rothermere, Sir Edward Carson, F. E. Smith and others, Lord Northcliffe, and Sir Max Aitken, now Lord Beaverbrook, took action—not because they belonged to one party or the other, but because they were men of action and decision of character and had the interest of the Empire at heart. In a very short time Britain was able to send shell for shell, and in a short time she was able to send ten shells for one shell of the enemy; and now she can fire fifty shells for one. That was why they formed the union of different parties. And let me point out that before the union was formed, the members of both political parties were called together, and the matter was threshed out, and bitterly threshed out in some instances, between the members of each political party. With the full sanction of representatives in the House, elections were held in the country when vacancies occurred, in order to test the public feeling, and justify the action of Lloyd George in carrying on his splendid action, and showing the great energy he has shown in this war.

I go further, and I object also to a Minister Overseas, as I pointed out the other day, because it handicaps the Minister of Militia in Canada. He builds the foundation, the bottom story, and, as the hon. member for Russell (Mr. Murphy) pointed out the other night, another gentleman takes charge, and the result looks like the homeward tracks from a wake. There is no system or unison in the work of the two departments. If it is absolutely necessary for the Dominion of Canada to provide a place for the present occupant of the office of Minister of Militia Overseas, surely we can get some ornamental position for him, where he will not be a menace to the nation. I do not wish to go into these matters, but there are hundreds of positions to which he could be appointed. If it is necessary to have him there, why not do away with the provision that he is to be a minister, and let him take his salary by a vote of the House, without any such action as this, which is going back to the dark ages and establish-