

whence they came. Furthermore, inasmuch as war service should be the basis of war franchise, and inasmuch as from the commencement of this war, not only in Canada, but in Great Britain, it has been found undesirable and unwise to accept those of the citizens of the class I have described for the highest service of war, it does not seem unreasonable that they should not exercise, during the war, that control of our destinies which is vested in the franchise. It is in a sense unfair to those men themselves, many of whose sons and brothers are fighting in armies in Europe against us, that they should be asked to take up the real war burden and go to battle against their next of kin. It is also unfair to them that in the midst of such a war they should be called upon to determine by their vote the vigour, or the direction, which that war should take, while their next of kin and their brothers, or their sons, are fighting in the armies against us. That argument has been advanced to us by some of this class themselves.

Not only is it unfair to them that they should be asked to decide the destiny and the vigour of a war against their brothers in Europe, but it is unfair to the rest of the population that they should have the right to so decide. I am quite free to admit, that, taken all in all, those who come from alien enemy countries have, in the main, during the progress of this war, conducted themselves satisfactorily within lines of obedience to the laws of Canada. It is not based on any complaint of that kind that the principle embodied in this Bill is adopted. It is because of the reasons I have mentioned, namely, that those who cannot in the nature of things be absolutely divorced in sympathy or sentiment from the peoples from whom they come should not be permitted, in justice to the rest of the population, to exercise a measure of control over the destinies of the war against those peoples, because it would be unfair to them to ask them to go to the polls and vote on an issue which decides to a degree the vigour, the purpose and the destiny of that war. It is also because war service should be the basis of war franchise. The two should go hand in hand—the obligation and the privilege. If, for reasons special to themselves, these people are not in a position to render war service of the highest kind they should not be entitled to the franchise while the war is on.

There has not occurred as yet in any great country engaged in this struggle of

unprecedented dimensions a general election. Where democracy governs nations in this war, it has not as yet left to individualism, by means of the ballot, the determination of the conduct of the war, save in one country alone. That country is Australia. When they were, in Australia, facing a situation such as we face to-day, but by no means as aggravated as ours, they prepared by legislation for the contest along lines similar to those of this Bill. They, however, disqualified for the war time election all of their citizens who were of alien enemy birth no matter how long they had been in Australia or how long they had been naturalized. This Bill does not go that far. This Bill disqualifies, for the war time election, those of alien enemy birth, or of other European birth and of alien enemy mother tongue or native language, who have been naturalized since the 31st March 1902. All who were naturalized prior to that date remain in the enjoyment of the exercise of the franchise. In Australia they made exceptions of any who had sons or brothers enlisted in the overseas forces engaged in the war. In Canada we allow the exception to go further and we admit to the franchise any whose sons or grandsons or brothers are enlisted in the overseas forces. There was an exception also in Australia of Armenians and Syrians known to be entirely out of sympathy with Turkey. We are making the same exception here. But, for the wider exceptions which I have named, our law in this regard follows the lines of the Australian law. As far as the franchise is concerned, these constitute the two fundamental changes brought about by this Bill.

It is further to be noted that whosoever is disqualified from voting by this measure is at the same time exempted entirely from combatant service in the war.

Heretofore the Dominion franchise has been, in seven provinces of Canada, the provincial franchise. Whomsoever the provincial legislatures admitted to the franchise was admitted to the franchise in a Dominion contest, save in Alberta, Saskatchewan and the Yukon. In those provinces and that territory, there has always been a Dominion franchise; that is a Dominion qualification for admission to the franchise at Dominion elections. By this Bill the provincial franchise is adopted in every province of Canada including Alberta and Saskatchewan. It cannot, of course, be adopted in the Yukon as there is no Yukon franchise.