

*Plebiscite Act*

Minister was kind enough to try to clarify my remarks, I might point out that as regards a barn door against which people are pounding for the sake of the noise alone, the Prime Minister was unfair to my leader in suggesting that he felt there was a trick merely in the wording of this matter. I feel that this whole question is not only a trick on the people in the country but a trick on the boys that are serving overseas.

The CHAIRMAN: Order. When the chairman stands, hon. members must sit down. It is strictly against the rules of the house, as I ruled last night and must rule to-day, to suggest that a measure before the committee is a trick or is something misleading or something deceitful. There are a number of exemplary expressions that are given in the rules of the house, and the hon. gentleman must withdraw what he has just said.

Mr. ROWE: I certainly will withdraw the word "trick", but it has been used so often that I thought probably it might convey what I think. I must withdraw that word, but I am sorry that you, Mr. Chairman, have not observed such expressions as "nazi tactics" as well, because they have been used on different occasions by the Prime Minister and might have been withdrawn also. I do say that so far as the government—

The CHAIRMAN: I admit what the hon. gentleman has said. We very often pass a number of expressions that should be ruled out, but it is only when the limit is reached that we have to apply the rule.

Mr. ROWE: I have listened—

The CHAIRMAN: On that point, may I further point out that if the chairman forgets or omits or does not understand an expression which is against the rules, it is the privilege of every hon. member to raise a point of order. There are a number of expressions that escape the ear and attention of the chairman, and if any hon. member raises a point of order we shall try to apply the rule most impartially.

Mr. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, I abide by your ruling; but a doubt not only in the minds of many who are supporting the government, but more in the minds of the people who will vote on the issue, exists nevertheless. The matter is as clear as mud across the country. People are asking every weekend, "What does it mean if we vote yes, or what will the government do if we vote no?" Nobody understands it, and the Prime Minister refuses to throw any light upon it so

[Mr. Rowe.]

that people will understand it. We have been passing through the most critical days in the history of the empire, and while I am not going to delay the committee—because I believe this should be passed—

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: But the language my hon. friend is using is calculated to defeat it.

Mr. ROWE: I have not held up the bill as much as the Prime Minister has himself. I think my leader has come out as clearly—and I have as well—as to what we will do on the plebiscite, and many of the right hon. Prime Minister's supporters have not done so, and the men who are opposing the bill to-day are those members of the government party who will oppose it in the country and who have stated their position in the house. I say to the right hon. gentleman that he might look over his own followers before charging us with an attempt to defeat the measure, which every one of us will try to put over in the country.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Perhaps when my hon. friend is giving me an example of how to proceed he will address the chair instead of me.

Mr. ROWE: I am glad to be reminded of the rules of the house by such an old and experienced parliamentarian as the Prime Minister. I was complimented in having him make over my speech for me, and I thought I might compliment him by addressing him a little. I do say that this question is not a trick, in parliamentary language, but it is so misleading—

The CHAIRMAN: Again, that is out of order.

Mr. ROWE: Well, Mr. Chairman, it is so misunderstood by the people of the country that even a man who has been in parliament for some time cannot find English words to describe it. It is not only a reflection upon the people of the dominion, but it is a shocking surprise and disappointment to every allied force in the war. No one knows what we shall do if the people say yes, and God only knows what may happen if they say no. And when I say this empire, the empire means us as well. Some of my hon. friends may smile or feel light-hearted enough about it even to laugh. But where is Canada's first defence? We have had conscription. I have not heard in the last campaign—and I listened to many speeches; I heard the Prime Minister speak—I never heard him say he was going to have conscription right up and down the highways and byways of the country. I did not hear him