

the idea of imperialism, of British wars, of fighting for Britain. The two notions of conscription and imperialism are indissolubly linked together, so that when one comes up the other is inevitably raised in their minds. *Toronto Saturday Night* of June 6 had this to say:

The compelling reason why the English-speaking majority in the Dominion of Canada should hesitate a long time before imposing overseas conscription on the province of Quebec, has been expressed in a dozen words by several French Canadians who have sought to make the position of French Canada intelligible to their fellow countrymen. It is the simple fact that conscription, for a kind of military service which he regards as being capable of being directed more to the defence of the empire than to that of Canada, has become to the French Canadian the "symbol of dominance," the outstanding proof of the intention of the English-speaking majority to exercise their majority power no matter how repugnant the results may be to the minority.

If hon. members have any doubt as to whether that is not a dominant idea, a large factor in this matter, they have only to refer to the speech of the hon. member for Richelieu-Verchères yesterday, when he was referring to his added difficulty of fighting in this war. He said, at page 3278:

Because I have to reason in my mind why I have to support the British flag and spend my energies for the defence of British rule in this conflict, or perhaps elsewhere.

On that statement the hon. member for Richelieu-Verchères is a better imperialist than most of the members in this house, because I doubt if many Canadians really think that in this war they are fighting for the support of British rule here or elsewhere. It establishes what I have said. It is a matter of the utmost importance that English-speaking Canadians should remember this and should try to understand it—I will not say to make allowances, because that is not the thing that one race should do towards another in a country like Canada.

To my French-speaking friends may I say this. From my knowledge of English-speaking Canada, nothing could be farther from the truth than that the idea of conscription is involved in the notion of dominance. As *Toronto Saturday Night* says further:

The trouble is that the great majority of English-speaking Canadians are not conscious of exercising this "dominance" and do not understand why the minority should regard it as such. They are convinced in their own minds that what they are advocating is in the best interests of Canada.

To my French-speaking friends I would add this to what I have just read. English-speaking Canadians feel that we are fighting for our survival, we feel that the fight can be best carried on the farthest away from our

shores, and that in order to defend Canada we have to defeat the enemy wherever he is. And we feel that any means are justified to that end. But there is no notion of racial dominance or anything of the kind in the English-speaking attitude.

Now, what can we do about these two views? I suggest first that we English-speaking Canadians should admit frankly that some of the blame is due to us. It would be a good thing if for a few days we all adopted the practice of blaming ourselves rather than blaming anyone else for any situation that has developed in the past. Some English-speaking Canadians, the extreme imperialist element, have said, "This is a British war, and because it is a British war therefore Canada must go into the war." But what did that mean to the other extremists in French Canada? They said, "Because it is a British war, therefore it is an imperialist war and therefore we should not go into it." The statement that we were fighting for Britain prevented French Canada from seeing that we were fighting for the survival of Canada. Every time a newspaper or speaker referred to fighting for Britain it was used in the province of Quebec by the extremist press as justification for their assertion that because we were fighting for Britain, therefore it was an imperialist war in which we should take a limited part.

This attitude of the extreme British element to which I have referred, and which we call "imperialist," shows a colonial mind, and its continuation has had a bad effect on Canadian life. It has closed our eyes to the nature of our country, to its history, to the realization that the majority of Canadians are not Anglo-Saxons, and that to them the only country they can call home—as well as to all true Canadians—is Canada. It led to opposition to the idea of our separate entry into the war. These people did not realize that it was far more dramatic that we an independent nation, as a result of the free deliberation of our parliament and government, should go into the war on the side of Britain, which enabled the British to say with genuine emotion, when they saw our troops arriving, "they did not need to come." Those who held a colonial attitude were opposed to the whole idea of the constitutional development of Canada, forgetting that "freedom is the life-blood of British institutions." Its emphasis on aid to Britain prevented us from appreciating early enough the fact that this was a universal war, a world war, in which wherever there was fighting, there our battle front lay. The danger to Canada, the importance of the magnificent efforts being put up by China and Russia, were concealed by the survival of this idea. The importance of the