

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: He realized that Parliament and his colleagues would be held up in the House of Commons for three months, prevented from attending to their work, while the Opposition, who knew there would be an election—the Prime Minister having said so—were trying to find an issue upon which to go before the people. So the Prime Minister, having the full responsibility of carrying on the affairs of the country, decided it would not be in the best interest of Canada that this should happen. When the session was called I myself felt that Hon. Dr. Manion would be in a very difficult position: that, having nothing to complain of, and being satisfied with the work of the Government, he would be looking for some difference, some issue which he could present to the people. I knew he could not find any practical and serious point of dispute with the Government, and that he and his followers would try to keep the House in session for three months, during which time they would be franking their speeches through the mails. Had they got their way, the members of the Cabinet would have been kept away from important duties during all that time. Then there would have been an election campaign, lasting two months. That would have meant five months during which the Ministers responsible for carrying on the government of the country would have been hampered in their work. Well, the Prime Minister decided that three months' time could be saved by going before the people at once. And it was all the more important that he should do so while the military situation in Europe was comparatively quiet.

The Prime Minister went to the people, and I want to tell my right honourable friend that the election campaign did not in any way paralyse the Government. I asked the Clerk of the Privy Council how many sittings of the Council were held from dissolution to the 25th of March, and his answer was that we had had in that time eighteen Council meetings and passed 826 Orders in Council and 453 Treasury Board minutes. I know something of what I am talking about, because I had to come here to meetings. Not only did Council function efficiently, but all our war boards were working hard.

My right honourable friend says that the calling of the election killed the war spirit in this country. Well, I disagree with that statement. There are two ways in which the feeling of our people may be tested. In the first place, the call to our young men to serve was answered magnificently. I know there was a splendid answer from Montreal, where I live. And then Canadians at large showed they

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had the war spirit when, in response to a request from the Minister of Finance for \$200,000,000, they subscribed \$300,000,000. These two tests indicate that the war spirit in this country is alive.

My right honourable friend seems scandalized by the fact that the Liberal Government went to the people without calling into its ranks men belonging to various political parties. He suggests that as a result the country was split in twain. Well, I fail to see how the country was split in twain on the 26th of March. And my right honourable friend must have a very short memory if he forgets that the Borden-Meighen Government carried responsibility for conduct of the Great War from 1914 to 1917, without asking the co-operation of the Liberal party, which had an able man at its head.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Co-operation was asked for.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: But not to the extent of admitting Liberals into the Cabinet.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Co-operation was asked for, and it was many long months before we were able to get it. Liberals were invited to come right into the Cabinet, too.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I will come to that. But from 1914 to 1917 the Conservative Government carried on without asking for the formation of a National Government.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: I do not think my honourable friend has any authority for that statement.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: If my right honourable friend will read Sir Robert Borden's memoirs he will find that from 1914 to 1917 there was no demand for a National or Union Government. That came in 1917. And the Conservative Government did not think of that co-operation until it was about to face the people.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: It did not go to the country as a party government.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: And it succeeded in forming a Union Government only after it had, through manipulation of the franchise, passed the most infamous legislation ever perpetrated upon a civilized country. The expression "infamous legislation" was used in the House of Commons by two Liberal members who later were brought into the Union Government.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Take care, for you may have to pass it too.