

Canada is fighting for her own survival in this war has not been brought home to French-speaking Canadians and that the lack has been intensified by words and actions not truly Canadian from many individuals; that there is a long history behind the recently expressed opinion of French Canada. They must guard against giving too great weight to extreme elements in Quebec.

French-speaking Canadians in their turn, must grasp that the mass of their fellow countrymen are thinking of Canada, its safety and its future, are not putting other considerations above that of their own nation. They must understand the perils that beset their country, and realize that it is better to keep those dangers as far away from our own shores as possible. They must have forbearance for those who are prejudice-bound on the other side, and see that the feelings of the majority of other Canadians are fundamentally as their own.

If the will to understanding does not grow on both sides, Canada is heading into disaster. If the will swells on both sides, Canada will play her full part in beating back the enemy that seeks her life, and will be assured of a future as a nation worthy of the two great peoples, each retaining their own strengths, united to form a whole that will be an example to the world.

Duty of members of Parliament

And this brings me, if I may be permitted to do so, to say just a word upon the duty which hon. members owe alike to their constituencies and to Canada as a whole. I know there are some who feel that as a majority in the constituencies they represent voted "Yes" or "No" on the plebiscite, they are under an obligation to take a particular stand in the present debate. I hope I made it sufficiently clear just exactly what it was on which the electors were asked to express and did express their opinion. It is not only the right but it is a duty of hon. members to interpret the view of their constituents, but it is equally a duty in so doing to see that a construction is not placed upon their views which was never, and could never have been intended. There is above all else a duty which every member owes to his constituency and to the country, once he is returned to parliament and that is to exercise all that is possible of reason and judgment in reaching a decision upon questions of supreme national interest and concern.

Here may I ask the house to permit me to cite the opinion of one whom the parliament at Westminster for more than a century and a half has been proud to acknowledge as not less outstanding among its authorities on political obligation than as a leader in the art of parliamentary eloquence.

Addressing the electors of Bristol on November 3, 1774, Edmund Burke, in circumstances not dissimilar to those with which

hon. members in our own parliament are faced at the present time, made the following declaration, the wisdom of which has been generally accepted by all democratic assemblies from that day to our own.

Certainly, gentlemen, it ought to be the happiness and glory of a representative to live in the strictest union, the closest correspondence, and the most unreserved communication with his constituents. Their wishes ought to have great weight with him; their opinion high respect; their business unremitting attention. It is his duty to sacrifice his repose, his pleasures, his satisfactions, to theirs; and above all, ever, and in all cases, to prefer their interest to his own. But, his unbiased opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you, to any man, or to any set of men living. These he does not derive from your pleasure; no, nor from the law and the constitution. They are a trust from Providence, for the abuse of which he is deeply answerable. Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion.

My worthy colleague says, his will ought to be subservient to yours. If that be all, the thing is innocent. If government were a matter of will upon any side, yours, without question, ought to be superior. But government and legislation are matters of reason and judgment, and not of inclination; and what sort of reason is that, in which the determination precedes the discussion; in which one set of men deliberate, and another decide; and where those who form the conclusion are perhaps three hundred miles distant from those who hear the arguments?

In our own country, it might need be three thousand miles.

To deliver an opinion, is the right of all men; that of constituents is a weighty and respectable opinion, which a representative ought always to rejoice to hear; and which he ought always most seriously to consider. But authoritative instructions; mandates issued, which the member is bound blindly and implicitly to obey, to vote, and to argue for, though contrary to the clearest conviction of his judgment and conscience—these are things utterly unknown to the laws or this land, and which arise from a fundamental mistake of the whole order and tenour of our constitution.

Parliament is not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests; which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against other agents and advocates; but parliament is a deliberative assembly of one nation, with one interest, that of the whole; where, not local purposes, not local prejudices ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole. You choose a member indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not a member of Bristol, but he is a member of parliament. If the local constituent should have an interest, or should form a hasty opinion, evidently opposite to the real good of the rest of the community, the member for that place ought to be as far, as any other, from any endeavour to give it effect.

That opinion never carried more weight in any assembly than should be attached to it by this House of Commons as we enter upon the present debate.

CONSCRIPTION FOR OVERSEAS SERVICE

Controversy will impair war effort

I turn now from a consideration of the amendment, as such, to a consideration of the question of conscription for overseas service which it raises. You will recall I stated that the plebiscite had three purposes. The first was that nothing should be allowed to obscure or impair the magnitude and balanced nature of Canada's war effort; the second, that the administration, subject only to its responsibility to parliament, should possess complete freedom to act in accordance with its judgment of the needs of the situation as they may arise in the prosecution of the war; and the third, which has a direct bearing upon the first two, that the government and parliament should not be bound by past commitments, but be free to discuss and decide on its merits the extent of the use of conscription.

The third purpose has already been achieved as a result of the holding of the plebiscite. The government and parliament are no longer bound by past commitments. We are, therefore, in a position to discuss the question of conscription from the point of view of the other two purposes of the plebiscite.

Controversy over the question of conscription has, I believe, obscured the magnitude and balanced nature of Canada's war effort. Unless the controversy can be ended, it will, I believe, impair the efficiency of our war effort.

Meaning of a total war effort

The policy of the government is and has been the achievement of a total effort for total war.

Let me, therefore, outline briefly, so far only as the mobilization of man-power is concerned, some of the requirements that must be met in order to achieve a total war effort. Until the whole man-power picture is before us, we cannot see what effect the application of conscription for overseas service would have on the achievement of a total effort for total war.

The war programme for the period up to March 31, 1943, was outlined in all its aspects on January 26. That programme, in its objective, represents, in the opinion of the government, a total effort for Canada. By a total effort is meant the utmost effort of which the country is capable. On February 4, the Minister of Finance gave the reasons for believing that the government's war programme for 1942-43 would constitute the utmost effort of which the country is capable. The minister said:

I believe that the programme which we plan should for the immediate future, the coming

year, be a programme which will strain the human and material resources of this country to the limit. I have, therefore, agreed as Minister of Finance, to a war programme for the coming fiscal year which, in my opinion, and in the opinion of my advisers, is the extreme limit of what this country can do, having in mind its human and material resources.

By a total effort is also meant an effort so balanced in all its aspects that no essential task will be left undone because a disproportionate effort is devoted to some other task.

The achievement of a total effort involves much more than the raising of large numbers of men. It involves the most effective use of all the available resources of the nation, material as well as human.

The mobilization of manpower

The mobilization of human resources, of man-power and woman-power, for a total war effort is far more complicated than is yet generally realized. It is not merely a question of raising men for the army, which was the main problem in the last war.

It should not be forgotten that Canada has only 11½ million people, of whom a considerable proportion are children or old people who cannot engage in active war service. From our limited population we must provide:

1. Men and women to perform the essential services without which life could not go on: such as the manufacture and distribution of the necessities of life, essential transportation over great distances, and the production of food for our own people.

2. Men and women to produce food, not only for our own people and our own armed forces, but also to help feed the people of Britain and other allied countries which cannot produce all the food they need for themselves.

3. Men and women to produce the machines and munitions of war for Canada, for Britain, and for the other united nations.

4. Men and women for service in all three of the armed forces.

All these man-power needs must be satisfied from one man-power pool. It is important always to remember that the total man-power is limited. If too many men are taken from one service there will not be enough left for some other service. All man-power demands must be kept in balance.

When asked in the House of Commons last November what was the ultimate objective of