

Whether the Mackenzie King government merits or does not merit my confidence as a war government is not in my judgment the issue in this vote. Early in 1945 parliament is to reassemble and then hon. members will have an opportunity to vote non-confidence or confidence in the government as may at that time appear to be in the interests of our country. Let this government carry on for the time being until we can have another opportunity to appraise their efforts and to sit in judgment upon them. We have only six weeks to wait. That will give us time enough to grow cool and calm and collected and to make a decision when our minds are not fired with the passions which have been engendered by means which have been clearly indicated during this debate.

But there are other considerations worthy of mention as I come to my decision. Do well-informed and thoughtful Canadians, Canadians of good will, desire an election at the present time? As I came through my province on my way to Ottawa I got in touch with several hundreds of people and not a single one was in favour of an election at this time. Is it in the public interest of Canada as a nation or in the interest of Canadians as a people; is it in the interest of the British commonwealth as a whole; is it in the best interests of the united nations and the cause of freedom to which they have dedicated themselves; is it in the best interests of Canada itself that we should have an election at this time? The opinions of many people might be quoted. Being a Social Creditor I shall refer to only one, that of the Hon. Solon Low, national leader of the Social Credit Association. Mr. Low has recently issued a statement, a portion of which reads as follows:

To plunge the nation into an election at this time would be criminal folly.

And, Mr. Speaker, for reasons which the ordinary member of this house and the ordinary citizen of this country appreciate full well I agree with Mr. Solon Low in this matter one hundred per cent. This statement clearly shows that Social Crediters, however much they may disagree with the policies of the present administration, are not urging or advising an election at the present time—this for many reasons. A vote against the government's resolution is a vote for an election at once.

Social Crediters endeavour to be consistent. Years ago they foresaw that under the present economic system involving avid, ruthless, reckless scrambling for foreign markets, a calamitous conflict would be inevitable.

Major C. H. Douglas earnestly warned of the danger and feared the complete destruction of civilization if that danger were not averted. He pleaded with the nations to consider with him suitable changes in their economic system to avert the impending catastrophe. The nations chose rather to plunge into the catastrophe. Seeing that such would be the case, Social Credit leaders, years ago, began to call for adequate preparation for the defence of our people. In February, 1936, I, as leader of this group, issued to the press in Edmonton, Alberta, a statement worded in terms as strong as I could devise, calling for immediate preparation for national defence. This statement will be found in both the *Edmonton Journal* and the *Edmonton Bulletin* of February, 1936, the 11th or 12th of February, if my memory serves me aright. On arriving in Ottawa for the 1937 session, I said in an interview that I would support the Prime Minister's proposals for increased expenditure upon national defence. This I did throughout the session of 1937. From that time forward in public meetings I constantly sought to impress Canadians with the need of prompt and effective measures for defence.

In the special session of 1939, I delivered a speech as recorded in *Hansard* of September 8, pages 47 to 50. In that speech I went on record in language as follows:

Therefore, the New Democracy declares that justice, equality, effectiveness, depend upon the conscription of finance, industry and man-power.

And again on page 49:

We must do all we can and go where we are asked to go, in order to meet the enemy of religion, of freedom and of race. It is stupid and insincere to draw a distinction between home and foreign service. There can be no distinction.

From this strong position, Mr. Speaker, this group has never receded.

The present occasion and the government resolution now before the house afford Social Crediters the first opportunity of proving their sincerity and steadfastness by voting for a measure of conscription. A vote against the government's resolution would be a vote which, in effect, would be a vote against conscription of 16,000 men, well-trained and in good physical condition, to go in support of their brother Canadians in a time of great stress and peril. I must vote for sending, by compulsion if necessary, 16,000 N.R.M.A. men to the theatres of war at the earliest possible date.

Social Crediters deplore the fact that on the outbreak of war, the government failed to conscript finance, industry and man-power.