

On the other hand, the rich are in a different position. They have their liberty. The poor man cannot pay the fine of \$250 and is sent to jail each time he is called to account, and the lamentable fact is that the great majority of them are farmers. I ask the Government to take these facts into consideration, for it is not yet too late. I maintain that politics were responsible for the resistance which was shown to the Military Service Act in certain quarters. Such being the case, I say it is the duty of the Government to at least be merciful and to extend forgiveness to those who have erred against the law. I am sure that such action would be appreciated and that it would very much help in restoring our country to its normal condition. Mr. Speaker, I do not think I can close my remarks in a more appropriate way than by quoting the observations of General Smuts the other day in respect to the late General Botha:

He returned to South Africa more than ever convinced that salvation and healing would only be found in a new spirit of humanity and in forgiving and forgetting old differences and wrongs.

Mr. W. K. BALDWIN (Stanstead): Mr. Speaker, it would seem to me that the leader of the Government has summoned the House as a result of what I would call "a half-cocked idea." Members have now been here five days, we are beginning the fourth sitting of this Parliament, and by reason of its demands the Printing Bureau is running night and day at high tension. The only conclusion to be drawn is that, for some reason or other, men of long experience have forgotten the preliminary work which is essential in connection with the calling of Parliament. The leader of the Government, with several of his ministers, has been overseas for the greater part of nine months. Whether they were summoned to Paris or went there on their own initiative we are not aware, but we do know that their work at the Peace Conference in the outer guard was infinitesimally small. While the Peace Conference was in session the legislators of this country were doing business at the old stand with a superabundance of Cabinet ministers. It was rumoured last winter that some of the delegates who went from Canada to the Peace Conference were going to the island of Prinkipo. It would not have bothered us had they gone there to hold a conference with the ancient cannibalistic tribes of the Orient.

Mr. ERNEST LAPOINTE: Amphibio-logical.

Mr. BALDWIN: It would not have troubled us, I say, because of the superabundance of ministers who were here to carry on the work of this country and squander the people's money. They were here under the leadership of the late Finance Minister, a man of noble bearing, fine character and good deportment. But yet he got rankled, he talked about dirty babies, he turned on the thumbscrew of the closure, he muzzled the Opposition, and then he and the other ministers went on at their own sweet will and put upon this country that great octopus, the railroads. That not being enough, they introduced a housing scheme to build houses for people too indolent to help themselves. Then they had a Good Roads scheme, but the provinces were not organized to receive the money and had no way to expend it properly. Not only that, but they multiplied expenses by putting upon the country a double portion of the Northwest Mounted Police—that excellent body which we have had for so many years—at a time when they had seen fit not to let any more people come to this land. And they have doubled the standing army. How did that co-ordinate with the action of our emissaries at the Peace Conference—a conference which directed all its energies towards rendering future wars utterly impossible. History has told us that any country that organizes a military machine goes on enlarging and perfecting it until at last an excuse is found to declare war. We do not want that condition of affairs in Canada.

Last session we were told time and again that we did not know our mind on the Good Roads question, the railroad question, or any other question; but after the closure was invoked we thought in the name of conscience we had better keep our seats than have the muzzle put upon us. I do not wish to repeat what the hon. member for Guysborough (Mr. J. H. Sinclair) and the hon. member for St. Johns and Iberville (Mr. Demers) have said. We know that the Government has put a ponderous load upon this country, and that the leader of the Government last session reached the end of his tether in trying to find money to pay interest upon the stupendous debt and to meet our maturing notes. By the fore part of August there was one hundred million dollars due, and it was paid by that legerdemain finance that says: We have got to renew our notes. As a result our securities instead of standing at par have dropped to about ninety-five. We