

at home. So the American government introduced what was called the Draft Act, under which men could be compulsorily taken into the army; but at the same time it enacted a provision that drafted men might hire other men to substitute for them in the army. I think it is a matter of record that many stout Canadians went over to the United States, sold themselves as alternates, or whatever you may call them, then deserted and came back to Canada with the money. In fact, some of my relatives probably joined the American army, and afterwards bolted back to Canada with the bounty. The American authorities did not know just where they went to once they had crossed the border. In fact, some of them came to Hawkesbury and that neighbourhood, where they spent their money.

The United States entered the last war in 1917, and although for a while there was some volunteer enlistment, conscription was adopted almost immediately. Then, some time between the end of the last war and the beginning of this war, probably about 1924 or 1930, the United States General Staff submitted to Congress a memorandum which provided for the raising of an army of ten million men in the next war by conscription. That memorandum was accepted by Congress and thereupon became part of the organic law of the country. Consequently, when this war broke out, there immediately went into effect a national selective system, under which men were called, examined and taken into the service. So far as one can learn from reading American newspapers, there has been no complaint whatever about this method of raising an army. In the army there are many men who no doubt would like to be at home, many who feel that their business and private affairs have been seriously interfered with, but in general the system has worked well and I have not heard of any untoward events. In the last war the United States had disciplinary battalions, and some shooting and killing had to be resorted to to enforce discipline, but, so far as I can learn, the present system has been operating smoothly, and there can be no doubt about the willingness of American troops to fight to the finish.

After you examine the story of conscription in Great Britain, the United States and Canada, one fact emerges, namely, that under the voluntary system the cream of our young men go to the war first, and what is left at the end is the military dregs of the population. Never forget that the cream of Canada's youth has been and is now overseas, and that what we are dealing with here is the military dregs. It is true, as was pointed out by the honourable gentleman who preceded me, (Hon. Mr.

Calder), that every year among the men who reach military age there are a number of the right sort in birth and breeding, who immediately go active or volunteer for active service before they are called out. I do not include these young men in the term "military dregs." They are natural-born warriors, intent on getting to the war as soon as they can. Some people, who do not know the facts, may think that these young men who volunteer in this way are of the same stripe as those who have been conscripted. They are not. They are part of the cream of the population who volunteer immediately they become of age, leaving the military dregs in the home defence army. I know what I am talking about, because for quite a few months I held an important job in the military service of this country, and I met the various types of young men.

What appears from a study of the subject is that conscription is not necessarily a war policy. It might more properly be described as a peace policy. At best it is a policy for the training of young men in time of peace, so that when war comes these young men may be required to serve in the armed forces of the country. Where that policy has been adopted in peace, before war breaks out, as it was in the United States, it has worked smoothly, but in every instance where compulsion has been postponed till near the end of the war, and it becomes necessary to deal with the country's military dregs, as I have described them, there is trouble. As I have pointed out, trouble was caused this way in the American Civil War, and honourable senators are aware of the trouble we had here in the last war. All such difficulties could be avoided by the adoption of compulsory military service in time of peace, as the system would be well in operation when war broke out.

There was some discussion of a proposal that because of the shortage of men our establishments might be reduced. It has been suggested that in making our commitments someone failed to calculate properly. Well, if all the provinces had made a proportionate contribution of manpower to the army, there would have been no shortage of men. That is all there is to this. Now that Canada has an army and is fighting along with her allies, she cannot consistently retire from any of the commitments she has made; she has got to go through with them. At the moment we are fortunate in having Czechoslovak, Polish, Dutch and Norwegian volunteers serving with us, but in due course they will be going to join their own armies and at that time the Canadian army will have to be made up entirely of troops from this country, and we shall have to provide adequate reinforcements.