

where telephone connection was available, securing direct communication with all parts of the country. In view of these circumstances, Mr. Speaker, I deemed it my duty to bring this matter to the attention of the House, as one example of the manner in which public money is being expended in our part of the country.

Another word and I am through. The armistice has been signed for months, the Peace Treaty has been approved of, and the possibility of war for the next generation to come is very remote. Under these circumstances, Sir, may I not appeal to the Government on behalf of those unfortunate defaulters and prisoners who, undoubtedly through ignorance of military law, neglected to register? May I not ask that they be granted a pardon, and that those who are confined be released from further imprisonment; with, at the same time, the withdrawal from the field of military officers in pursuit of defaulters? In such a benevolent and merciful action, the Government, I am sure would, to say the least, receive the heart-felt gratitude of the fathers and mothers of these young men, and their clemency would infallibly redound to their credit.

Mr. WILLIAM FINDLAY MACLEAN (York, South): I have listened with considerable interest to the remarks of the hon. member (Mr. Leger), and from my knowledge I can thoroughly agree with him in his appreciation of the loyalty and good citizenship of the Acadians not only of New Brunswick but of other provinces. They are among the oldest citizens of Canada, and while they are French, they are, as I believe, a distinct section of that race. They have preserved their identity and have played an important part in the history of this country, and I can only bear testimony in support of what the hon. gentleman has said. But I want to say something on another question that concerns the people of Canada. The debate on the Address is my opportunity to refer to this question, and though the House be small, still my voice may be heard further than the limits of this Chamber. If one has something to say to the people of the country and is prepared to say it, let him say it in the House when the opportunity arises. In view of the fact that hon. gentlemen, and especially members of the Government, have in this and other debates directed public attention to the political situation and the political future of Canada, and while these questions are of moment and must be discussed, I am

rising in my place to say, notwithstanding what they have said and the attention that has been paid in another portion of this building to the industrial situation of Canada, that the pressing problem before the people is the high cost of living. When I speak thus I am speaking on behalf not only of my own province and constituency but for the whole of Canada; and I repeat, after hearing the debate and all these discussions, that the pressing question is the high cost of living. It is the pressing question not only in Canada but in the United States; it is the pressing question in Europe and particularly in Great Britain at this very moment, and I regret that our attempt to solve this problem has not so far produced any very great results. To emphasize my position, I intend to point out what the real difference is between any effort that is made in Canada to tackle this problem of the high cost of living and the efforts that are being made in the United States. In the United States, it will be observed, while the President is for the time being engrossed in the consideration of the League of Nations and the settlement of peace, he deemed it necessary, first, to direct the whole energy of the Government of the United States—and is now so doing—to finding some sort of relief for the people of that country who are suffering, like ourselves, from the high cost of living. What view did they take of this question in the United States? They dealt with it from the standpoint of a federal question, as a duty incumbent on the whole of the United States to find a solution for the problem. We, on the other hand, have not taken such a view. We have made some headway, but I must point out—and I have directed attention to the matter a great deal in this House now for probably fifteen or twenty years—what are the differences between our methods and those that obtain in the United States? The United States have discovered that in order to deal with social and economic problems of supreme importance they must approach them as federal questions, to be dealt with by federal law, with a federal enforcement of that law. I have had discussions in this House with eminent constitutional lawyers regarding that question, and during all the time that it has been discussed in this Parliament there has been a determined effort to evade the responsibility of the Federal Parliament to deal with these matters as they are dealt with in the United States. Now, the United States has become a nation by reason of war—by reason of civil war and participa-