

to Sir Drummond Shiels, and Mr. A. C. Spencer-Hess, British parliamentary representatives, whose foresight, industry, devotion and solicitude on the British side, joined with Sir Howard d'Egville's ever-active efficiency on the American side, packed our every day with great worth, and to Doctor Beauchesne whose tireless and scrupulous efficiency took care of each of the needful essential details from Ottawa, and to the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) whose foresight, understanding, thoroughness and patience at length effected the organization of the delegation, a real debt of gratitude. To acknowledge, and in some small measure to discharge my share of that debt, may I here in public thank these gentlemen and assure them that I believe the result of that visit, both for Canada and for the commonwealth, will prove to be worth all that it cost.

Many a time as we sped through hundreds of miles of rich British countryside and got acquainted with afflicted British towns such as Portsmouth, Glasgow, Liverpool and Coventry; many a time as we inspected great war industries, as we saw amazing processes or chatted with war workers; many a time as we reviewed our fighting forces and talked with our soldiers, sailors and airmen, I wished that all Canadians could have been with us. Our well-to-do people all would know then, as we do, something of what it means to be without, or very short of, eggs, milk, beef, pork, cheese, butter, sugar, jams and fruits, all things that Canadians so much enjoy and feel that they need. Perhaps they would sense how it feels to be in a land that is producing all that its resources will allow of such foods and still cannot have enough to live on without importing these commodities across an enemy-infested ocean. Our more fortunate folk would perhaps understand that we depend for our very lives upon common people who live and feel, desire and earn, deserve and should receive what too many even in Canada do not now receive.

But I must turn from our British experiences to consider the speech from the throne. Two things caught my attention. The first was the plebiscite proposal, and the second was the suggestion of a balanced programme for the production of foodstuffs.

The Prime Minister's attitude on the plebiscite perplexes me, in spite of his fine detailed explanation. In the first place he shows that we need conscription, not for the air force, not for the navy, but only for the army. Then he details how tremendous has been Canada's war effort in the production of all kinds of goods, as great, it would seem, as our man-power can sustain. He promises an almost limitless expansion of every kind

[Mr. Blackmore.]

of production without showing where the man-power exists. Then when he has demonstrated that our labour is quite inadequate for these other activities, he proposes presumably to conscript part of this inadequate labour to build a yet greater army. In other words, having demonstrated that the need for conscription for fighting is all but non-existent, having convinced us that to take away more of our men would jeopardize the necessary development of our production projects, he implies that conscription for the army is vital to our war effort and he risks Canadian unity, through the holding of a plebiscite, to free his hands, ostensibly to introduce a policy which he seemingly does not need and which he can use only at the expense of impairment of our war effort.

Since before Canada declared war, Social Crediters have maintained that recruits for any branch of the armed forces could most likely be obtained in sufficient numbers at any time by using the national credit to pay the soldiers, the sailors or the airmen more attractive incomes and to guarantee them and their dependents real security after the war. Raise the pay, increase pensions and allowances, insure employment and your ranks will fill rapidly. These are the things Social Crediters would do. Also your sacrifices will be more equal. On September 5, 1939, was issued from a caucus of Social Credit members of parliament and Alberta cabinet ministers held in Edmonton a statement in which appeared the following excerpts:

We believe that Canada should finance its share in this war not by the creation of huge debts but in the following manner;

(a) By the creation by the government of the necessary credit and currency combined with definite price regulations to prevent any serious inflationary rise in prices;

May I pause to point out that Social Crediters foresaw that all these prices would have to be adjusted. I continue:

(b) By borrowing abroad only for the purpose of obtaining needed goods and services beyond the capacity of our people to furnish.

We strongly support the just demands of our people for the greatest possible equalization of sacrifice by—

(a) Placing an embargo on capital and capital assets as at the date of declaration of war;

(b) Requiring that financial institutions and corporations reveal all undisclosed reserves as at the date of declaration of war, and that these be forthwith conscripted by the dominion government;

(c) Introducing a more steeply graded income and profit tax.

We hereby resolve that conscription of material and financial resources for the purpose of securing the greatest possible equalization of sacrifice as outlined above shall be introduced before the conscription of individual man-power.