

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): No, it is not, and I give my word of honour on that. On that day, in answer to a question asked by the then hon. member for Weyburn, Mr. Douglas, the Prime Minister said:

When the government decides that it is necessary and advisable to resort to conscription as a method of raising men for service overseas, an order in council will be passed dealing with members of the forces as a whole.

I am sure my right hon. friend will remember that.

It will not be a matter of passing a series of orders in council—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Have I permission to go on?

Mr. SPEAKER: I am listening.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I continue:

—but one order in council will cover the entire force.

That is the basis of my question. In studying order in council 8891 which was laid on the table of parliament yesterday—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. SPEAKER: As I understand what the hon. member is now saying, he is really anticipating a speech which the Prime Minister may make and of which he is suggesting a text.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Quite the contrary, Your Honour. What I desire to know in brief is if there is to be only that order in council passed in order to give effect to what the Prime Minister said on July 22, 1942, or will it be necessary to pass subsequent orders in council having regard to the fact that the number ordered to be mobilized under this order in council is limited to 16,000.

Upon the passing of this order in council will these men be general service men from now on, or are they still to be home army men, and when will the transition period be passed? I think we should have some clarification of this position, because it is not clear in the order in council. I believe I am making a reasonable request. I think I have carried out my undertaking that there would be nothing controversial about this question. I am simply asking for an interpretation which the country wants to have.

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): I thank my hon. friend for giving me notice to-day of the question which he would like me to answer on Monday

next. I shall read carefully in *Hansard* what he has said and will make as precise an answer as it is possible for me to make.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): That is all I ask.

REINFORCEMENTS—QUESTIONING OF MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

(Hon. A. G. L. McNaughton, Minister of National Defence, having again appeared before the house):

Mr. POULIOT: Mr. Speaker, I do not want General McNaughton to believe that I am lacking in respect for him in any way. I would recall that on February 24, 1943, I was the one who suggested his promotion to full generalship. I did that for one reason, because of what had been said by the Prime Minister on November 14, 1941. I quote from page 4430 of *Hansard* of November 14, 1941, where the Prime Minister is reported as follows:

The general's last words to me were that I could depend upon it that he would take care to see that lives were not needlessly sacrificed. I remember those words very distinctly, that he as commander of the Canadian forces would take great care to see that lives were not needlessly sacrificed.

That is the action of a great man, that a commander in the field should not want to waste human lives. He knows the value of human life.

There is another thing that I would ask the general, and it is this, not to mention national unity in connection with conscription. I will qualify what I have said. It has been repeated over and over again that if conscription was not imposed in this country it was precisely to preserve national unity. What was meant by national unity? What was meant was that the province of Quebec was against conscription for overseas, and therefore conscription for overseas service should not be enforced?

In the first place, Mr. Speaker, I regret very much that we did not have from the very beginning of the war a well-balanced conscription, but a one-sided conscription. I regret very much the action of the Department of National Defence which has given emblems for service only to those who have volunteered, thereby indicating that all the others who were contributing to the war effort in other ways were slackers just because they had not enlisted in the army. That is a great mistake which was made at first.

Another mistake was to be afraid of the word "conscription". I prepared an article telling the draftees who were working in industries essential to the war effort what they had to do. That article was based on the regulations. But what did the director of