

France and Flanders to fight for you and for me should be paid less than the man who is engaged by you or by me to gather hay and put it in the barn. I do not see why the soldier should not get just as much—certainly not less. I believe considerably more than—the common labourer in the country. If you want to make voluntary enlistment in this country even a greater success than it has been, why not increase the soldier's pay? Why not make the wealthy men of Canada pay the difference between what the soldier now receives and that which he ought to get? The men of wealth in this country have done very little so far. Why not make the profiteers disgorge some of the scandalous profits that they have made and apply them on the compensation to be paid to the soldiers and to their wives and children and the soldiers who have come home maimed? Honourable gentlemen are mistaken if they think that throughout the length and breadth of this country there has not been a shock such as has rarely been experienced in Canada over the disclosures which have recently been made. Is there any one in Canada who has not been scandalized beyond measure to war that one firm alone made a profit of \$5,000,000 on bacon supplied by it for the British army in one year?

Organize recruiting intelligently and systematically, without favoritism and with equal chance for promotion and recognition, and you will, I feel confident, obtain better results than with this Bill.

There is one thing that I want to emphasize to-night, and I say it after full and mature consideration, and with all the deliberation of which I am capable. Over and above, beyond and paramount to, the question of conscription or voluntary enlistment is the question of national unity in this country. To my mind the establishment and permanence of national unity is far more important than the getting for the war of a few thousand men either by conscription or voluntary enlistment, in addition to those we have already raised. This war will come to an end some day, we all hope very soon, and we all believe—in fact we know—that it will end in the triumph of justice and freedom. When this war is over Canada will stand more than ever in need of that which she has hardly ever had—national unity. I am one of those who think that the efforts of the Fathers of Confederation towards creating a Canadian national sentiment have had but very little success so far, and within the last few years what there was

of national unity in Canada, I regret to say, has just about been swept away. There is a chasm to-day between the two races in Canada, the depth and width of which few men realize. Warning has been given and often by many repeated but not heeded and we have a condition arising out of that situation for which the province of Quebec is blamed and unjustly blamed.

There has been a confusion of cause and effect in that connection. I desire to say without fear of contradiction, that all the opposition to this measure there is in Quebec to-day—and it is pretty general, I admit—is not so much opposition to conscription per se, as it is a manifestation of the deep, longstanding and recently much aggravated resentment on the part of the French Canadian people at the insults and attacks so constantly directed against them and especially the attacks on their mother tongue.

Conscription has merely provided the occasion or opportunity for voicing this same deep sense of irritation which was bound to explode soon or late in the province of Quebec. This bill is merely the occasion, the opportunity for giving vent to the resentment which has existed for years past, and which has been growing daily in that province. The manifestation against conscription is in reality a manifestation against the vilification of the province of Quebec. It is a protest against the persecution of the language of the French Canadians, who constitute two-thirds of the population of this country, the descendants of the heroic founders and colonizers of Canada. I say that if this question had been settled, as it should have been settled years ago, if this Government had taken the responsibility which it should have taken, you would have heard very little opposition to conscription in the province of Quebec.

An Hon. SENATOR: Not at all.

Hon. Mr. BELCOURT: I would ask the honourable gentleman to go to Quebec and inform himself as to that. The trouble with my honourable friends from Ontario is that there is not much use in speaking to them about these things. There is no use in uttering the warnings which I have been uttering for years in this House and in other places. They are not heeded, they are not listened to. I invite my honourable friend to go to Quebec, where he will soon discover that the opposition is due very largely to the animosities and the irritation caused by the persistent persecution to which the French language has been subjected.

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