

Hon. Mr. Farris: You do not expect that to happen to the present government?

Hon. Mr. Haig: I did not hear what my honourable friend said. I think that we can count upon a federal election within the next twelve months, and I am going to make one or two prophecies. Four years ago I made a prophecy which turned out to be 100 per cent right; nevertheless I know that prophesying is always dangerous. However, I suggest that there will not be an election in May of next year. I understand that some of the members of another house would like to have an election in that month, and some people from my own province also would like it, though why I do not know. I suppose they think that if an election were held then their party would be returned. But I am persuaded that the temper of the people of Canada just now is such that they want a full and frank public discussion of the problems facing this country, the western nations and the world at large. In 1949 we thought that before the present parliament had run out we would have come to the end of the cold war. Well, we are now within a year of the end of the close of this parliament and the cold war is just as bad as it ever was, and we are no nearer to understanding than we were four years ago. We are not certain whether the matter will be settled within the next four years, but it must be settled within some four years.

It is said, rightly or wrongly—and I think rightly—that Stalin hopes to carry on the present kind of cold war with the western nations until they either fall out among themselves or go broke. That means that when we Canadians are called upon within the next year to decide upon a new government we should give our best judgment to the matter, and send the best obtainable men and women in Canada to represent us in the House of Commons. I do not think that can be done by a quick election. It seems to me that it can only be done if we have time to conduct an election properly, if the public be given a chance to understand the issues. I have no right to advise the Liberal party, and I presume that if I attempted to do so they would not take my advice.

Hon. Mr. Euler: They might.

Hon. Mr. Haig: But if all Liberals think what some Liberals that I know are thinking, namely, that the party now in office has given us the best government and the best policies that Canada ever had, and that this country is in better shape than it ever was before, then the longer the election is postponed the better it will be for them. But

the people of Canada have good common sense, and they will reach the proper conclusion when the time comes.

Hon. Mr. Horner: They have not found that out yet.

Hon. Mr. Haig: It will become apparent when election time rolls around, for the feeling in this country is now much keener as to the true issues facing the people.

I do not need to go to the United States for an illustration, but those of us who watched the last two elections in that country saw an entirely different kind of election this year from the one in 1948. Public opinion in that country was aroused as it never had been before, and the largest number of votes ever polled in the United States was polled this year. That was because the people realized the tremendous issues at stake and believed that the future policy of the world depended to some extent on their judgment. True, we are only 14 million people as compared with 140 million Americans; nevertheless we have an important part to play in the history of the world today. I believe that our opinions on world issues next to those of the United States, are as important as those of any other country. In saying that I am not belittling Great Britain in what she has done, nor am I belittling France, Holland or Belgium in what those countries may do. What I say is that the hope of the freedom-loving peoples of the world rests on the shoulders of the inhabitants of this continent, and if we do not come through with a solution of the problems, I do not know who in the world can solve them.

For all these reasons I think the issues in Canada must be brought clearly before the people, and I hope that when the results of the next election are tallied no party will have a majority in the House of Commons such as the present government enjoys. I say that such an overbalance does not make for good democratic thought and development. No matter how optimistic any honourable senator may be, no matter how much he may admire the present government, it would be a much stronger body if it held only 150 seats in the other place instead of 185. The results of all the by-elections during the past two years indicate this important fact. I am told that the opposition would not have taken any of these by-elections had it not been for the large majority held by the government. These conclusions may or may not be true, but the elections in the provinces would indicate that they are true. Some would have us believe that provincial