

prefer Henri Bourassa speaking his mind openly before the whole country to certain narrow-minded members on the Government side of the House who cannot find the courage to say openly what is in their mind or who even proclaim loudly what is not in their heart.

Mr. Lamarche, ex-member for Nicolet, whom I should like to see again in this House, speaking the other day at the Monument National, asked whether Canada in the present war should make a further effort, or call a halt. When the Prime Minister announced his conscription policy, he stirred up dormant consciences and gave the people of this country an opportunity of examining in the light of reason and facts whether Canada had done its duty. So long as our participation in the war was voluntary, I supported all measures to that end, but when it is intended to turn a free and generous gift into compulsion, I also hold without a moment's hesitation that we should call a halt, that further efforts on our part would drive the country to ruin and bankruptcy and that we shall have our hands full trying to meet our accumulated obligations.

At the meeting at the Monument National to which I referred, Mr. Montpetit demonstrated beyond possible doubt that by contributing further Canada would imperil its economic development. I think, Mr. Speaker, the people's welfare calls upon us to put a stop immediately to the sending of troops to the front. In so doing, we would allay a serious agitation and restore peace in the homes; mothers would regain their happiness when they see that their sons are kept to them to till the land, and, as explained by the distinguished economist whom I have just named, the Empire would derive more benefit from our sons' work on the farm. Otherwise the wound inflicted Canada will never heal.

I now state before the House that in future, I shall support any leader or any party who declares himself against compulsory service. The people through a referendum should have a say in the matter.

I shall for those reasons vote against the Military Service Bill and for any amendment that may have the effect of nullifying the bill.

I beg to give another reason for my vote. How can the Government, after its mandate has expired, justify the passing of such an extreme measure? I have always taken the real duty of a representative to be to carry out the people's wishes and ensure the people's welfare. Perhaps my stand against conscription will not have all

[Mr. Barrette.]

the effect desired, but at least will I be able to repeat in my heart the words of a noble mother, Admiral Bouvet's, in front of her son's coffin: "Open wide the doors, for never has so great an honour entered this house." There are defeats, Mr. Speaker, that carry with them more glory than victories, and as for me I never felt so honoured as when I take this opportunity of combatting a measure so baneful and unpatriotic.

Before I resume my seat, I beg to move in amendment to the amendment, seconded by my hon. friend Mr. Achim: that all the words of the said amendment after the word "following" be taken out and the following substituted therefor: "that this Bill be not now read a second time, but be read a second time this day six months."

Mr. SPEAKER: Sir Robert Borden moves:

That Bill No. 75, Military Service Act, 1917, be now read a second time.

To which Sir Wilfrid Laurier moves in amendment:

That all the words of the question after the word "that" be struck out and the following be substituted therefor:—

"The further consideration of this Bill be deferred until the principle thereof has, by means of a referendum, been submitted to and approved of by the electors of Canada."

To which Mr. Barrette moves, seconded by Mr. Achim, in amendment to the said amendment:

That all the words after the word "that" be struck out and the following substituted therefor: "this Bill be not now read a second time, but it be read a second time this day six months."

On the motion of Mr. F. F. Pardee, the debate was adjourned.

On the motion of Hon. Mr. Sévigny, the House adjourned at 10.47 p.m.

Thursday, June 21, 1917.

The House met at Three o'clock, the Speaker in the Chair.

PAPER PRESENTED.

List of points on National Transcontinental Railway, Eastern Division, from which rails were lifted for shipment overseas to France.—Mr. Cochrane.

EXPENSES OF PARLIAMENTARY SESSIONS.

Mr. W. B. NORTHRUP (East Hastings) presented the first report of the Select Committee appointed by this House to act with