

front as I have been. I bring back to the people of Canada from these men a message that they need our help, that they need to be supported, that they need to be sustained, that reinforcements must be sent to them. Thousands of them have made the supreme sacrifice for our liberty and preservation. Common gratitude, apart from all other considerations, should bring the whole force of this nation behind them. I have promised, in so far as I am concerned, that this help shall be given. I should feel myself unworthy of the responsibility devolving upon me if I did not fulfil that pledge. I bring a message from them, yes, a message also from the men in the hospitals, who have come back from the very valley of the shadow of death, many of them maimed for life. I saw one of them who had lost both legs pretty well up to the hip and he was as bright, as cheerful, as brave, and as confident of the future as any one of the members of this House—a splendid, brave boy. But, is there not some other message? Is there not a call to us from those who have passed beyond the shadow into the light of perfect day, from those who have fallen in France and in Belgium, from those who have died that Canada may live—is there not a call to us that their sacrifice shall not be in vain?

I have had to take all these matters into consideration and I have given them my most earnest attention. I realize that the responsibility is a serious one, but I do not shrink from it. Therefore, it is my duty to announce to the House that early proposals will be made on the part of the Government to provide, by compulsory military enlistment on a selective basis, such reinforcements as may be necessary to maintain the Canadian army today in the field as one of the finest fighting units of the Empire. The number of men required will not be less than 50,000, and will probably be 100,000. These proposals have been formulated in part and they will be presented to the House with the greatest expedition that circumstances will permit. I hope that when they are submitted all the members of the House will receive them with a full sense of the greatness of the issue involved in this war, with a deep realization of the sacrifice that we have already made, of the purpose for which it has been made, and with a firm determination on our part that in this great struggle we will do our duty, whatever it may be, to the very end.