

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I did not say that. I said there may be.

Mr. COLDWELL: Yes; I stand corrected. The duty of this house is clearly to see that there are no repetitions of the Hong Kong episode. It is our duty to see that our men are given at least a chance to defend themselves properly.

The government proposes to ask the people of Canada for, to use its own words, "by means of a plebiscite, release from any obligation arising out of any past commitments restricting the methods of raising men for military service." That being so, the people of Canada have a right to ask that those responsible for the sending of partly trained, improperly equipped men to Hong Kong, and who failed to satisfy themselves that the island was in a condition which made its defence a possibility, should be relieved of any further responsibilities in the dispatch of our men to any war zone. This is no time to condone carelessness or inefficiency. These delinquencies have brought Britain, the United States and our allies to the brinks of several disasters. Britain, and recently the United States, appear to have acted promptly to deal with such situations. The people have a right to know that no more ill-equipped partly trained men will be sent to places impossible to defend.

As to the plebiscite itself, we are always prepared to support a proper and democratic reference to the people of a clearly defined policy. All that the government intends to ask in the present instance is release from its promise not to conscript for overseas service. That is not enough. The government should tell the people exactly what the war situation really needs. Does it or does it not require conscription of men for overseas service? I hope that in this debate the discussion will not centre round the minor matter of taking a plebiscite. The government has decided to take it; then let it be taken with the least possible delay, and in the meantime let the government take the country into its confidence and tell us why release from its commitments is necessary. This is no time for political strategists to wrangle for party advantage. Obviously the need for equipment and supplies is as great, indeed, judging by the lack of equipment for men already in training, the need is greater. The Canadian people, I believe, demand that industry and finance shall be subjected to national selective service to the same extent as man-power, at the same time and on the same terms. Of course that is not what the

new leader of the Conservative party wants. Mr. Meighen said quite explicitly at Weston town hall last Thursday:

I have offered to support the government without stint or reserve in a policy of compulsory selective service for all our forces, our farms and our factories.

No mention here of compulsory service of finance and industry. In commenting, the *Montreal Gazette* said:

This policy is broad enough and comprehensive enough to cover the whole man-power issue.

Quite so, but it reveals the real aim of the people who engineered the new leadership; the newspapers who support him and the so-called committee of two hundred, who failed to secure control of Canada several years ago through their defunct Leadership League and who now, in the midst of war, are trying a war stunt of confusion and division. These people are not advocating the policy urged by the Canadian Legion, which asked for an all-round mobilization of man-power, industry and wealth, though they have pretended to do so; or the policies urged by farmer and labour groups calling for the conscription of industry and wealth before further measures for the conscription of man-power are proceeded with. Neither are these policies involved in the amendment that was moved this afternoon. Beginning with the War Measures Act, right through to the National Resources Mobilization Act, the government has had full power to place this country on a total war footing, with one exception, which government spokesmen have claimed to be of minor importance. Yet, as I have pointed out, our industrial and war effort has been carried forward on the business-as-usual basis, with profits and big business control the governing considerations. Let us know, then, what the government proposes to do, and the needs which make these proposals necessary. None will give more support to an all-out war effort than we will give, but we demand that it be based on equality of sacrifice and not be made merely an opportunity for the regimentation of the Canadian people in the interests of a few monopolistic trusts and their beneficiaries.

In order to place our point of view clearly before the house, I am going to move an amendment to the amendment, seconded by the hon. member for Weyburn (Mr. Douglas) in these words:

That all the words after the words "this house regrets that Your Excellency's advisers" be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

"have used the sweeping powers conferred by the National Resources Mobilization Act mainly for the conscription of men for home defence, and in the opinion of this house no total effort