

Government. But I return to Canada impressed at once with the extreme gravity of the situation, and with a sense of responsibility for our further effort at the most critical period of the war. It is apparent to me that the voluntary system will not yield further substantial results. I hoped that it would. The Government have made every effort within its power, so far as I can judge. If any effective effort to stimulate voluntary recruiting still remains to be made, I should like to know what it is. The people have coöperated with the Government in a most splendid manner along the line of voluntary enlistment. Men and women alike have interested themselves in filling up the ranks of regiments that were organized. Everything possible has been done, it seems to me, in the way of voluntary enlistment.

All citizens are liable to military service for the defence of their country, and I conceive that the battle for Canadian liberty and autonomy is being fought today on the plains of France and of Belgium. There are other places besides the soil of a country itself where the battle for its liberties and its institutions can be fought; and I venture to think that, if this war should end in defeat, Canada, in all the years to come, would be under the shadow of German military domination. That is the very lowest at which we can put it. I believe that this fact cannot be gainsaid.

Now, the question arises as to what is our duty. I repeat once more, a great responsibility rests upon those who are entrusted with the administration of public affairs. But they are not fit to be entrusted with that transcendent duty if they shrink from any responsibility which the occasion calls for. If the cause for which we fight is what we believe it to be, if the issues involved are those which have been repeatedly declared by all our public men and in all the press of Canada, I believe the time has come when the authority of the state should be invoked to provide reinforcements necessary to sustain the gallant men at the front who have held the line for months, who have proved themselves more than a match for the best troops that the enemy could send against them, and who are fighting in France and Belgium that Canada may live in the future. No one who has not seen the positions which our men have taken, whether at Vimy Ridge, at Courcelette, or elsewhere, can realize the magnitude of the task that is before them, or the splendid courage and resourcefulness which its accomplishment demands. Nor can any one realize the conditions under which war is being carried on. I have been somewhat in the midst of things at the front. Yet I feel that I cannot realize what the life in the trenches means, though I know that I can realize it better than those who have not been as near to the