

war is on. A war election would not precipitate party strife. Such strife unquestionably exists, but a war election would intensify it a hundred fold—yea, even a thousand fold. At present it exists mainly among the politicians—among the political leaders. It is not troubling the people much. A political contest for the mastery in Dominion politics—for the control of the House of Commons and the administration of the country's affairs, would carry this strife into every community in the Dominion.

The country does not want that state of affairs, but how is it going to be avoided? There is only one logical method of averting this strife, which not only Mr. Kemp and the government, but every citizen who earnestly desires victory for our cause, must deplore. And that method is by uniting in one cabinet both political parties and carrying on the affairs of the country on a non-partisan basis until the war is concluded.

The Government must admit that so far as the electorate has given any mandate, the period of such authorization has expired. It is living upon borrowed time—upon time consented to by the Liberal opposition, and confirmed by Imperial enactment. That was asking a good deal from political opponents, but it was granted. Now, another request for extension of the parliamentary term is to be asked, not for a year only, but for "such further extension as may be necessary." An extension of the parliamentary term is necessary to the end of the war if a war election, with all its horrors, is to be avoided, but that should not necessarily imply an extension to one political party of the seats of power and authority. The extension of the term of the Imperial Parliament is not a precedent which would justify the continuation of a party government in office, for there they have a coalition government in which the Liberals, the Unionists and the Laborites are represented, and the Nationalists could be if they desired it. A Coalition Government is the fair thing if party strife is to be avoided.

There are many advantages which would accrue through the coalition for the period of the war of the political leaders of the Conservative and Liberal parties. The important question of recruiting—the most important before the country today, because it involves National honor and Imperial safety—could be solved without either party seeking a political advantage.

There are 19 vacant seats in the House of Commons, counting the dual seats held by Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Hon. Mr. Forget. Many of these seats have been vacant for a long period, because of the inability of the leaders to agree. With a coalition government in power it would not be difficult to bring about agreement for election by acclamation. For all the new members would be government supporters.

A coalition government would be the means of abolishing the patronage evil. Patronage lists in peace times are bad enough, but in war times they are a scandal and a curse to an infinitely greater degree. We do not appeal to Conservatives alone to do the fighting. The appeal is to Liberals as to Conservatives. Let us treat them alike as loyal citizens. Loyalty should be the badge—not politics.

When the parties at Ottawa are unified, and there is no good reason why they cannot and should not be unified, then we will have a rallying to the colors which will cheer the brave old Mother Country and our sister dominions and our Allies, and shatter the hopes and expectations which the Kaiser may be cherishing about disunion and political strife in Canada.