

never exactly suit another country. In the case of each, local conditions must be considered; the nature of the tasks undertaken by each country, and their relative importance in the total effort of all, must be the decisive factor.

To achieve a total national effort everyone must contribute to the effort either directly or indirectly. All cannot do the same work. As far as possible, each must be fitted into the appropriate task. Many, perhaps the majority, can find the appropriate place for themselves, and, as Mr. Churchill said, save "vast government machinery". Certainly no government is wise enough to decide the appropriate task for every individual in the nation. And, even if governments were all-knowing, the war would not wait while this stupendous job was being performed. What the government can do, and what we propose to undertake to do, is to meet the urgent needs by the best means we can devise.

I shall not attempt at this time to outline the measures which are contemplated in order to extend the scope of national selective service. I shall confine myself to saying that the extended policy of selective service will comprehend measures to increase the supply of man-power available for war industry and for the armed forces; also measures to safeguard and, where necessary, to assist in providing agricultural labour required to expand war production on the farm. These objects it is proposed to achieve by positive action to increase the mobility of available man-power, to add to the number of women available for employment, and to facilitate the transfer of labour from non-essential occupations to direct employment in the furtherance of the war effort. The policy also envisages improvements in the method of selecting men for compulsory military training and service.

The administrative machinery required to carry out the proposed measures equitably and efficiently will necessarily be intricate and complicated. The capacities of men and women cannot be weighed and measured and graded with the same certainty as the qualities of wheat or cement or steel can be determined. To perform the complicated task of selection with success will demand both time and skill.

The government, moreover, has no desire to add unduly—which means wastefully—to governmental machinery. It is imperative that we avoid using men and women for unnecessary tasks. In those aspects of our war effort in which voluntary methods are working satisfactorily, voluntary selection, including a measure of choice by the individual of the appropriate field of service, will be

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

continued. The use of the more expensive and complicated methods of compulsion will be confined to those branches of our war effort where it is felt that compulsory selection will increase its efficiency.

While the government, in its policies, has sought a total effort, it has never ceased to believe that only by a united effort could total effort be achieved. In every step the government has taken from the moment the threat of war appeared on the European horizon, we have sought so to direct our policies and the course of public affairs that the country would remain united in its support of the national effort.

Every hon. member of this house knows that, except for the assurance that, in the event of a European war, there would be no conscription for service overseas, this parliament would never have decided, in the immediate and unanimous manner in which it did, to stand at the side of Britain in the resistance of aggression, and the defence of freedom.

Hon. members are also aware that if, at the time when Canada's participation in the war was challenged in an election in the province of Quebec by a government professing a different political faith, a like assurance with respect to service overseas had not been given in the name of the present government by the late Right Hon. Ernest Lapointe, by the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Cardin), and other Liberal leaders and members of this House of Commons from the province of Quebec, the verdict of the people of that province might have been wholly different.

At that time, the people of the province of Quebec turned out of office the government that had sought to thwart Canada's war effort, and placed in office under the leadership of Hon. Mr. Godbout, a government which was prepared to cooperate with the federal administration in furthering the national effort. I doubt if any service at the time meant more to the allied cause than that rendered by the people of the province of Quebec in thus demonstrating the unity of Canada in its war effort.

When, three months later, the direction of the war effort of Canada by the present administration was challenged—though from an opposite extreme—by a resolution of the legislature of the province of Ontario, and the administration appealed to the people of Canada in a general election, the government gave the assurance that, if returned to power, it would continue to maintain the policy of no conscription for service overseas. Not only the government, but the then leader of the Conservative party—a party disguised it is true, for the time being, as the National Government party—took an equally strong stand in opposition to conscription for overseas service. The candidates, not