

majority of the hon. members in stating that the constitution of the country forbids sending our soldiers to fight outside of Canada, without special legislation being enacted in this House and that no such legislation altering the very basis of our constitution would be enacted without its being first submitted to the people of Canada. No, Mr. Speaker, there can be no question of conscription. Obligatory enlistment is not needed. The people of Canada have given noble proof of their loyalty. Freely and voluntarily, four hundred thousand men have already answered the call. If they are required, one hundred thousand more will follow of their own free will. And thus the Prime Minister will have given to the Empire and the allied nations a royal and magnificent contribution to restore the peace of the world, which, let us hope, Providence will soon grant to Europe.

Mr. Speaker, it does happen that the very best intentions are misconstrued. The Government, as is referred to in the speech from the Throne, has undertaken to organize the national service with a vigour to put to better use our natural resources. In many quarters, this scheme has been misinterpreted, connecting the proposal with the bugbear of conscription, they concluded that the Government's purpose was to bring about conscription either military or industrial. The Prime Minister, the leader of the Opposition, members of this House, bishops, provincial ministers have raised their voices, they have explained the scheme, and stated that national service had nothing to do with military conscription; that it meant only the organization of labour in all its spheres. Always people will be found who will not harken to logic, or, I dare say, Mr. Speaker, who try to find in this proposal a pretext to turn the people against the Government and make petty political capital, as is being done in Dorchester, out of a project which, if carried out, will have an immense influence on the future progress and prosperity of Canada; not launching it on the war-path, but along the highroad of commercial, agricultural and industrial development and all the other fields of national energy.

Mr. Speaker, it is stated in the Address of His Excellency that the prime ministers of the Dominions have been invited to take part in the conferences to be held in England for the purpose of discussing matters connected with the war. The Dominions are honoured thereby. But the honour has been well deserved, if one takes into ac-

count their unflinching loyalty and the sacrifices they have made in men and money. The ties that bind us to the mother country have been cemented by the blood of our boys. In the future, our voice will be heard in the Parliament of Nations for the maintenance of peace, because we have paid our full share of human lives to obtain the supreme result.

It may be, Mr. Speaker, that in those conferences our position in the Empire after the war is over will be discussed. The subject is full of anxiety and serious speculation for any Canadian who loves his country and who sees those weighty problems already looming up. I feel convinced that the right hon. Prime Minister who presides over Canada's welfare with such tact and firmness, with love for his country and loyalty to the British Empire will approach these great questions with all the prudence that characterizes all his public acts and that he will not allow any change in our status in the Empire without the consent of the people of Canada.

His Excellency reminds us that the life of the present Parliament will expire next October. In that case, general elections are in order within a short time. How then could the Prime Minister leave the management of the country's business to go to England to take part in the war conference? Is it reasonable that he should be forced to throw the country into an electoral turmoil while war is raging and his whole attention should be devoted to one single aim, so to say: ultimate victory.

There is to be no election in England during the war. Even the ministers recently chosen have been relieved of the obligation of returning before the people to have the selection ratified. I am not surprised then, Sir, of the announcement made by the Government that a resolution will be submitted for authority to ask the Parliament of the United Kingdom to pass an Act for the continuance in office of this Parliament. Moreover, it is but a further extension of the delay we requested last session. No possible change could justify our throwing the country into the confusion of a general election in which political passions play such an important part and which might divert the minds of the people from the great end it is serving by helping the Empire. I am therefore convinced that this resolution will be unanimously passed by the House; it is of public urgency and necessary for the safety of Canada and of the Empire.