

Mr. Speaker, a few minutes ago the hon. member for the Yukon translated in his own language an extract from an address delivered on the 7th of January last at Laval University, in Montreal, by Mgr. Bruchesi, Archbishop of Montreal, touching certain events in the province of Quebec. I believe it is my duty, also, to quote those words in my native language:

Nous sommes une colonie de l'Angleterre et dès lors, si l'Angleterre était défaite, la première proie de l'Allemagne serait le Canada. Or, nous ne voulons pas être allemandes. C'est pourquoi nous devons faire notre possible, puisque le sort du Canada est lié aux armes anglaises.

We are a British colony and hence, should Great Britain be defeated, Germany's first prey would be Canada. But we have no desire to become Germans. Wherefore we must do our utmost, since Canada's fate depends upon the success of the British arms.

At the beginning of the war the bishops made a study of the situation. No dogma or morals were under consideration, but a guidance had to be given.

That guidance the bishops of the Province of Quebec have indicated. In a letter published throughout the country, they have stated that Canada's duty was to help Great Britain and have congratulated the Canadians on the sacrifices already made. The bishops have not since altered their views.

In this war, Canada is not directly attacked, but it is so indirectly. The country is threatened and we must see to its defence. Nor have we failed in our duty. The Minister of Militia bears witness to the fact. Our young men have come forward in large numbers voluntarily.

There has been no conscription and I hope the question will never be mooted in this country.

Our youth are enthusiastic. They are ready to shed their blood in the service of two causes: papacy and humanity. At this juncture, it is humanity that calls for defenders, and our brave children have rushed to the defence of liberty. Such was their motive in coming forward and such is to-day the inspiration that keeps them in the trenches over in France.

The Province of Quebec, and the French-Canadians, fully realizing the importance of the gigantic struggle and its meaning, have done their duty. The French-Canadians have recruited and are still recruiting regiments which will ever march where honour leads.

Among those who are taking a glorious part in the war are to be found descendants of some of our heroes. The recent

[Mr. Paquet.]

address of Sir Sam Hughes at Toronto vindicates us from many calumnies. He is aware of the untiring ardour of my gallant fellow-people, and has given our race its due, and I must thank him for it.

On many solemn occasions, the Quebec members of the Canadian Parliament have asked the majority of this house and the majority of the citizens of this country to give recognition to the most sacred rights of the French-Canadian minority.

We, French-Canadians, know and appreciate the value and the sacredness of minority rights. So it is with a feeling of pride that I see my compatriots respond, nobly to the call of the flag and to the help of England and France who are now fighting together for the defence of the rights of minorities and of lesser nations.

The thrilling ardour with which our sons march forward to the battlefield is inspired by their wish to keep intact the right to their language, their faith, their institutions and the heritage of their forefathers. To my French-Canadian compatriots belonging to the minority I appeal. I ask them to answer with loyalty the call of His Royal Highness and rush to the front because the Motherland is fighting for the freedom and independence of nations; for the respect of treaties and the sacredness of international obligations, for the defence of smaller peoples, and of minorities, for international loyalty and the upholding of the noblest sentiments that distinguish mankind.

The Government is in duty bound to take immediately extraordinary measures for the defence of Canada. His Royal Highness states:

The life of the present Parliament expires in the autumn of this year, and, under existing legislation, a dissolution and election would be necessary in the early future. My advisers, however, are of the opinion that the wishes of the Canadian people and the present requirements of the war would be best met by avoiding the distraction and confusion consequent upon a general election at so critical a time.

That purpose can only be effected through the medium of legislation by the Parliament of the United Kingdom. A resolution authorizing and requesting the enactment of such legislation as will extend the life of this Parliament for the period of one year will be presented to you.

As a French Canadian, belonging to the minority, I realize fully how careful we must be before asking for any alteration, even temporary, of the British North America Act.

Only on account of the extraordinary circumstances created by this terrible war do