

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that those who are to be drafted have the right to be consulted. It has been said and repeated in every tone, during this debate, that the most interested ones, those who should, above all, have their say in this matter, were the soldiers who have already crossed the sea. Allow me, Mr. Speaker, to take exception to this doctrine. The men who have already gone to the front have done so of their own free-will; they were not led there through coercive means; nobody forced them to enlist.

But when it comes to forcibly send over those who have already used their own judgment and have decided to stay at home, I believe that we cannot deny them the opportunity to express their opinion.

Some may find too severe what I am about to say; but it is my duty to speak and of my statement I take beforehand the full responsibility. I do not fear to express my opinion here. They refuse the referendum in apprehension of the result, because they dread the verdict of the majority of the people of this country, which might confirm the opinion already expressed by the province of Quebec. They want to be able to say throughout the country that the province of Quebec is the only one to oppose conscription; that the French Canadians only refuse their co-operation to the Empire. They wish to speculate upon this campaign of prejudices inaugurated a few years ago and which is being waged throughout the country against the province of Quebec.

It would be useless to insist. To point out such an object, means to submit it to the most severe judgment of the honest conscience of every true Canadian.

I deny the Prime Minister the right to wrap himself up in the mourning flag of our country in order to preach us the destructive creed of Imperialism and to attempt the Germanizing of our political morals.

Let us have no discussion, Mr. Speaker, upon the tomb which covers, united in the same glory, the ashes of our fellow-citizens, English and French, mowed down together by the war.

Their common tomb is a symbol of peace and harmony among the races. From this union of the races in death, let us draw a lesson of good understanding for those who survive. And upon this glorious tomb let us respectfully incline our thoughts to find therein teachings of tolerance and of liberty.

Mr. M. S. DELISLE (Portneuf) (Translation): Mr. Speaker, this House should not expect a very lengthy speech from me. I

[Mr. Cardin.]

am a business man and I have less than others the practice and art of public speaking. However, I believe that I must protest, as a citizen of the province of Quebec, against an assertion made by the hon. Minister of Inland Revenue (Mr. Sévigny).

He has stated that he was keeping his place as a minister so that our province may continue to be represented in the cabinet, since it is entirely against conscription and that he is in favour of it; since it demands that the law be submitted to the electorate and that he refuses.

No, Mr. Speaker, in this cabinet, the hon. minister represents only himself, and his portfolio which he keeps in defiance of all his former pledges.

The hon. minister realizes it is so well, Mr. Speaker, that, in his speech upon the present Act, he has tried to make us believe that the electors of Dorchester had approved conscription since they had elected him on January 27, 1917. But he was called to order and to common sense by one of his friends who went through this Dorchester campaign, in his interest; I am referring to the hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Achim).

I quote herewith the strong language used by the hon. member for Labelle in contradicting the minister's assertion. I find them at page 2972 of Hansard, French edition:

Mr. Achim: My hon. friend puts an exceedingly delicate question to which I could with difficulty reply without hurting his present feelings and without taking explicit exception to the course he has chosen to adopt. Much would have I preferred it had my hon. friend not raised the issue, but since he has, I have no option but to tell him that in my opinion it would be better. Should ever a disruption occur in this country, Mr. Speaker, I say it will not take place between the province of Quebec and the remainder of Canada, but between the province of Ontario and the rest of the Dominion. Yes, Ontario, where the capitalists are attempting to crush the freedom of labour, Ontario whose manufacturers are attempting to restrain the freedom of trade, Ontario whose jingoes are trying to strangle freedom of conscience. I do say that if ever there is a disruption, that will be it, and the sooner the better perhaps.

Mr. Speaker, I am grieved beyond expression to have to utter such words and I pray you to believe that before bringing myself to utter them, many doleful hours have I gone through; I feel that old bonds are being severed which I had hoped would be permanent. In brief, Mr. Speaker, I must declare that in this House I shall vote on this question with the Liberal party; that at the next elections I shall vote for the anti-conscriptionist candidate, that I resign as Conservative candidate in the county of Labelle and that in the province of Quebec I shall speak in favour of the Liberal party.

The minister of Inland Revenue labours under another delusion which I should like to dispel. He gives the result of the Dorchester