

I say we had in effect a policy whereby a Canadian defence force was conscripted. That was extended by Order in Council so that members of this force could be used in certain limited areas outside of Canada. On November 22 that—no more and no less—was the Government's policy. Now, what did Colonel Ralston stand for on that day? He stood for the extension of the application of the National Resources Mobilization Act to service in Europe. Why did he resign? It was because the Government refused to accept his—

Hon. Mr. HORNER: Recommendation.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: His recommendation. That is why Colonel Ralston resigned, because the Government would not budge from the policy it had in force.

Hon. Mr. KING: Until—

Hon. Mr. CALDER: Well, now, pardon me.

Hon. Mr. KING: Continue:—until the Government ascertained that these men would not go voluntarily.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: Until the necessary pressure was brought on the Government that forced it to do what it did not want to do.

Hon. Mr. KING: Have it your way, if you wish, but that is not the fact. The fact speaks for itself.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: What is not the fact?

Hon. Mr. KING: The Government would not use compulsion until satisfied that these men declined to go into service voluntarily. That was quite evident. And that was stated as the policy in 1942.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: I do not understand.

Hon. Mr. MACDONALD (Richmond-West Cape Breton): Order!

Hon. Mr. CALDER: I should like very much to have a clear statement from the honourable gentleman.

The Hon. the SPEAKER: I would say to the honourable gentleman from Richmond-West Cape Breton (Hon. Mr. Macdonald) that the present situation is the reverse of one that arose some time ago. The honourable gentleman who has the floor (Hon. Mr. Calder) has asked the honourable leader of the Government (Hon. Mr. King) a question, so a point of order does not arise.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: His Honor is quite correct.

I have no desire to state anything that is not accurate, and shall be only too pleased if the honourable leader will point out wherein I am wrong.

Hon. Mr. CALDER.

Hon. Mr. KING: I do not wish to delay at all.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: It is not a question of delay.

Hon. Mr. KING: I think that what happened is quite evident. In 1942 the Prime Minister made a clear and concise statement with regard to conscription of men drafted under the National Resources Mobilization Act. He said if the time came when it was necessary and desirable to conscript these men, they would be conscripted. There is no need to go over what has happened within the last few weeks. We are all conversant with that. We know that Colonel Ralston resigned, and that the Prime Minister brought into the Cabinet General McNaughton, who had believed that he could induce the N.R.M.A. men to volunteer. When they failed to do that, the Prime Minister carried out the undertaking he made in 1942.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: That does not alter in the slightest degree the statement I made. I have not disputed that the law which was passed gave the Government full powers to send these men wherever it chose. That is not the issue at all; that is not what created the crisis. Now, understand me. A Government may put a principle in the law, but in doing so it takes power to exercise a certain policy.

Hon. Mr. KING: Or an alternative.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: Will the honourable gentleman just permit me to follow out my argument? The Government took power to apply this law in part only, for the time being. In the year 1942 the Government, as a matter of policy—I emphasize that—confined the application of that law to our home defence forces. Is that true?

Hon. Mr. KING: Yes.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: All right. A little later on, by reason of conditions then existing, the Government issued under that law an Order in Council authorizing the sending of troops to Jamaica, Bermuda, Newfoundland, the Aleutians and I think somewhere in the Arctic ocean. Is that right?

Hon. Mr. KING: Yes.

Hon. Mr. CALDER: That was done as a matter of policy. There still remained in the law the power to do something else, but the Government never exercised that power. Now, what Colonel Ralston asked was that the Government, as a matter of policy, should exercise that power under the law; but the Government would not do that.

Hon. Mr. KING: Not at that time.