

*W.L.M. King - the original
draft*

*Prime Minister
Rear Bench's Commentary C.B.C.*
November 27, 1944.

Of all the dramatic scenes we've had in the **C245035** House of Commons since it re-opened last Wednesday -- and every day has been quite a show -- this afternoon's sitting was the most exciting and the most important. Prime Minister Mackenzie King was on his feet for three solid hours, fighting for his political life, for the life of his government, and for the immediate future if not the life of his party.

I think it's fair to say that as a speech -- never mind whether you agree with it, or whether you're convinced by it -- as a speech, it was a magnificent performance. I've been fortunate enough to have heard most of Mr. King's major speeches of the past three years, including the long and contentious ones of 1942 at the time of the plebiscite and Bill 80, and I've never heard him in such form. He talked for three hours without notes, except for two or three prepared bits and a sheaf of quotations, and his voice never flagged from beginning to end. Apart from everything else, for a man 70 years old it was a remarkable feat of energy and endurance.

As to its content, obviously it's not easy to summarize in three minutes what Mr. King delivered in three hours. He began by outlining in great detail, and with plenty of quotes from Hansard, the development of the conscription issue during five years of war. Then he recounted with even