

Therefore, I have reason to believe that I am expressing the opinion of the majority of the electors in my province, in fact in all provinces, when I say that I am in favour of a reasonable and moderate cooperation, consistent with our interests and resources. I am prepared to let the government and the Prime Minister, whose genuine Canadianism is beyond question, the task of proposing to parliament the most appropriate measures of ensuring that cooperation, parliament remaining of course the supreme arbiter of our national destinies.

Viewing the matter from the standpoint of my province and of my compatriots of Quebec, I feel entirely reassured in this regard, as in all other indeed, knowing as I do the character, the experience, the hability and the sound patriotism of the ministers who represent the province of Quebec in the government of the country. I cannot see where it would be possible to find, in our midst, men more enlightened, better balanced and more respectable than our present ministers. If it is thought possible to find men equal to them, no one could seriously suggest that there are better men.

The other members from that province are also equal to the task. Considering all these points, I may confidently state to the country that it would be wise and indeed essential to view with distrust those who appeal to prejudice, who try to sow panic, to stir passions and to create disunion. It would be better to rely upon the good judgment, the calm and moderation of our representatives, who are directly interested, as any other citizen, in the welfare and the happiness of the nation. My determination to endorse any measure aimed at cooperating with the defenders of justice, order and conciliation who are presently the object of a brutal attack by the advocates of violence and force, remains limited to voluntary assistance. I am convinced that, in the final analysis, this method of voluntary contribution is the most effective and lasting.

I wish to state, without the slightest hesitation and without any mental reservation, that I am fully opposed to conscription. I am completely against a system so inconsistent with our Canadian turn of mind. Experience has shown moreover that it is not effective, for, without having given the desired results, it has, in the past, fostered trouble and unsettled our national life.

In order, therefore, that none may falsely construe my attitude in the matter, I repeat that I am completely opposed to conscription.

(Text) Mr. Speaker, coming from a county which has a number of English-speaking citizens I would not wish to allow this occasion

[Mr. Blanchette.]

to pass without saying a few words in the language of that citizenry, and to state that, if ever there was a time when national unity should be advocated in order to safeguard our democratic institutions, surely it is in the present crisis. Although we may have a vast territory, let us not forget that territory is but the body of a nation; the people who inhabit its hills and its valleys are its soul, its spirit, its life. Individuals may form communities but it is democratic institutions, and their attributes, that can create and maintain a nation; and upon those democratic attributes is predicated our progress, our advancement, and all that is dear to our hearts and very existence. It has truly been said that:

The multitude which does not reduce itself to unity is confusion and, as a corollary, the unity which does not depend upon the multitude is tyranny.

Whatever the views of each and every one of us may be, I am certain that if we remain calm and moderate in our deliberations, both in and out of this house, and if furthermore, should the necessity arise, we are disposed towards conciliation on this side of the Atlantic, lack of which has brought the conflict on the continent, then there can be no doubt that Canada will attain its aim and purpose in the present conflict, which is sincerely desired in all parts of the dominion, namely, that "effective cooperation" enunciated by our right hon. leader.

I wish to thank him for having called parliament as quickly as he did in order to submit to it matters of the greatest import for its consideration and attention.

I also wish to congratulate most heartily the mover of the address, the hon. member for Algoma West (Mr. Hamilton). The able manner in which he has acquitted himself on this occasion is not only a credit to himself but also an attendant honour to the county which he has so ably represented since his coming into this house.

(Translation) In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I wish to express the profound hope that this house shall consider, as the country naturally expects it to do, the proposals advanced by the government, with the moderation, the calmness, the disinterestedness, the prudence and the real patriotism solely capable of maintaining and safeguarding a true feeling of Canadian unity, and, with this in mind, I have the honour to second the motion of the hon. member for Algoma West (Mr. Hamilton).

Hon. R. J. MANION (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I had intended merely in a sentence to ask the forgiveness of the mover (Mr. Hamilton) and the seconder (Mr. Blan-