

government would be the first to admit. But in any criticism we may offer let the fact not be obscured that Canada is rendering a service of which we may well be proud. There are times when we are too prone to belittle our own effort. That is due in part to the fact that we are hearing over the radio and reading in the press of the huge production programmes announced by our neighbours to the south, and losing sight of the fact that we are a nation of some twelve million while they have some 130 million. We have, as has been pointed out in this house—and I think it cannot be too often repeated—accomplished some great things since we declared war. We have some 150,000 soldiers, sailors and airmen serving outside Canada. We have a total voluntarily enlisted man-power of something over 387,000. Our navy went into action immediately war was declared and has played an increasingly important part during the battle of the Atlantic. The personnel of the Royal Canadian Air Force as of December 31, 1941, totalled something over 100,000 men. To this must be added some 12,000 civilians, or a force of nearly twenty-five times as many as we had when war was declared.

I should like here to commend the Minister of National Defence for Air (Mr. Power) for his foresight in establishing an air cadet corps and schools and other services in order to bring up the educational standing of men who did not quite meet the required qualifications. The commonwealth air training scheme is turning out pilots, gunners and observers at a rate far in excess of that which was planned for this time. It has been reported that some 80 per cent of the personnel of its air crews are Canadians, and the fact must not be lost sight of that Canada is paying 60 per cent of the cost. In its first three years of operation the plan will cost something like \$500,000,000, more than the dominion collects in taxes in a normal peace-time year. Canadian aircraft industry, very small as we know it was at the beginning of the war, has now turned out something over 2,700 aircraft. Chemical and explosives plants of huge dimensions have sprung up. Shells are being made in factories, some of which were closed for years, others have been built upon soil which up to a few months ago was barren land. Tanks, army vehicles, are rolling off assembly lines; automatic weapons, guns and small arms ammunition are being produced in greater and greater quantities.

One could go on and tell of corvettes, freighters and smaller craft being built in Canadian shipyards. All this is a tribute to the industry and energy of the Minister of Munitions and Supply (Mr. Howe) and the

[Mr. Gray.]

staff that he has gathered under him. Canada's direct war spending in the present fiscal year will be more than \$1,300,000,000. When to the war expenditures are added the other expenses, federal, provincial and municipal, the Canadian taxpayer will be found to be paying in taxes between fifty and fifty-five cents out of every dollar he earns. These are some of the things we are doing, and, for a nation of around twelve million people, not to be deprecated.

In spite of these tremendous accomplishments more remains to be done. It is true that too many of us may be what is termed Monday morning quarter-backs, but it is a poor coach who does not take a lesson from such quarter-backs.

Mr. Speaker, these words stand out in the speech from the throne:

The conflict can have but one of two outcomes. Either tyranny, based on terror and brutality, must be overthrown; or the free peoples of the world, one and all, slowly but eventually, will be reduced to a state of bondage. Upon the outcome depends, for generations, the future well-being of mankind.

Agreeing as I do with that statement, I am disappointed that the government have not given us the facts which enabled them to put into the mouth of his excellency the words indicating the gravity of the crisis. These were not surmises but facts of which they had knowledge; facts which, if given boldly to the people of Canada, would have been accepted just as willingly as the people have accepted every definite request made during this war. They have accepted, without question, higher taxation, restrictions, loans of all kinds, whatever they have been told was necessary for the successful prosecution of the war.

With this in mind, Mr. Speaker, I submit that in this crisis the government would be justified in now—and by "now" I mean immediately—asking parliament to extend the provisions of the National Resources Mobilization Act in order to eliminate the restrictions concerning service in Canada only, in order that our armed forces both here and overseas, including reserves and reinforcements, may be maintained at the highest possible strength consistent with the maintenance of our food supply and industrial production. Instead, the government is about to refer this question to the people of Canada in the form of a plebiscite. I would not be true to my convictions or to my duty as I see it if I should fail to voice in this house my disapproval of that procedure. It means delay; it means heartburning; it means bitterness. It means that after it is all over and the government is released from its pledge, the issue still must be faced; and the boggy of national unity