

The extended application of compulsion to national selective service is a highly complicated matter. It is, in itself, a selective process. The use of compulsion selectively is no less complicated in the mobilization of man-power than in the mobilization of material resources. However, the fact that further decisions were not announced in November has not delayed the further application of the principle. Indeed, it has rather facilitated the very careful planning and organization which is so essential before the extended application of selective service, whether on a voluntary or a compulsory basis, can be brought into effective operation.

Everyone will recognize that the effective use of the man-power—and the woman-power—of a nation is essential to the achievement of a total war effort. But it is not the total. It is, as I have already stated, only one factor in the total. In considering any extension of the application of selective service as a means of promoting a total war effort, it is important to remember that national selective service is not an end in itself, but is only a means to an end, that end being a total war effort.

The problems of mobilizing resources, and mobilizing man-power, are inseparable from one another and like all other aspects of our war effort must be kept in proper balance. Material resources cannot be mobilized without man-power to mobilize them, and no good purpose is served by mobilizing men unless they are provided with the necessary materials and tools to work with, and the necessary equipment and arms to fight with.

Under the authority of the National Resources Mobilization Act, a limited measure of national selective service on a compulsory basis has been applied since October, 1940, in the selection of young men for military training. The principles of selection have been age and marital status, with adequate safeguards, through postponements, for other essential forms of national service.

The government now proposes to apply the compulsory powers of national selective service to other aspects of the war effort as well as to military service. These powers will be applied selectively and progressively to those activities where it is considered by the government that their application will contribute to the goal of a total effort. It has not been necessary, nor would it, indeed, have been helpful at an earlier stage to make demands upon the nation such as the government has in contemplation, and as will be set forth as the session proceeds. In this connection I invite your attention particularly to what I am now about to say.

These demands will intimately affect the lives of many men and women. They will

also effect the life of the nation in the following way: there will be a further very definite curtailment of the amenities we have hitherto been able to preserve. These demands will not affect physical health or that contentment of spirit that comes from serving great causes, but they will make further inroads upon the comfort and convenience of very large numbers, and upon the character and aspect of our daily life.

It must not be supposed that there are large reserves of idle people leading a leisurely existence who can now be called to the national ranks. The entire adult Canadian population, with very few exceptions, gets up in the morning, works all day, and goes to bed tired out at night. In our form of society people have been accustomed to find their own jobs to a very large extent, thus saving vast government machinery.

If all the efforts of everyone were really devoted solely to making war, there would be no food, or fuel, no transport, or clothes. We have to recognize the fact that a very large proportion of the population, particularly women, is occupied in ministering to the needs of the more actively engaged population, and that that number has increased since the last war with the increase of population who have to be ministered to.

The process which is now to be applied—and has, indeed, been continuously applied—much more vigorously, is not the calling of idle people to work, but the sharpening and shifting forward of a proportion of their effort into work which is more directly related to the war.

Here I end the portion of the remarks to which I invited special attention.

It may surprise hon. members to learn that the words I have just used are not my own words. With the exception of the two words "Canadian population", which I have substituted for the words "British race", the statement is not mine. It is a statement by the Prime Minister of Great Britain. After all that has been said in Canada in recent months about all-out conscription in Britain, and its application to women as well as to men, it may occasion still more surprise that this statement was made, not at the beginning of the war, nor at the end of the first year of war, nor even of the second year of war, but as recently as December 2 last.

The explanation of the timing is simple. In war, correct timing is vital. Some steps must be completed, before others can be taken. The time of application of measures is quite as important as the extent of their application. No mechanical rule or order can be followed. The appropriate measures for one country will