

a good method, first of all, because it seemed to me utterly unfair that in the same town, or perhaps in the same street, three or four sons of one family should go and another family on whom the State had precisely the same claim should not send a single man to the army. I thought it a bad system for another reason, the very reason on which many of those who are opposed to this Bill oppose it now—that it was a wasteful system, and that if we were to make any attempt to have a proper correlation between the men employed in the necessary Civil Services and those who go to fight our battles, that could not be arrived at by a system of haphazard enlistment and recruiting which depended on the voluntary will of individual people.

At this point I wish to say that in my opinion the introduction of this Bill can in no way be considered as a precedent for a permanent policy of conscription for Canada. In the years to come, when we look back upon this historical occasion, the verdict of future generations will be that it was a triumph for voluntarism that we raised 400,000 men by a voluntary system reverse, and as we require only 100,000 men by military compulsion. This will not be considered as a precedent for conscription; it will be considered as a precedent for the reverse, and as we require only 100,000 men to be raised by this method, there is no question of a permanent policy being adopted by this country. The Bill itself shows that there is not. The Bill is practically dead when 100,000 men have been conscribed under its term, and it has no further effect without additional legislation by this Parliament.

The British Parliament never asked that the policy of conscription should be referred to a referendum. In New Zealand the people never asked for a referendum on that policy; the Parliament of those countries acting upon their own authority and according to British practice, put a conscription measure into force without consulting the people. Notwithstanding what has been said by my right hon. friend, the Premier who now controls the destinies of Australia, as he is known to be a conscriptionist, as he fought his election upon that ground and as he was returned to power, the people knowing what his policy was, would have the right to-day to enforce some measure of conscription in Australia, and no doubt he will do so in a short time. In the great republic to the south of us, after an experience of three years of this war, when the people of the United States were asked to participate in it, when they were asked to raise perhaps five or six hundred thousand men, did the

[Mr. Middlebro.]

Government submit the matter to a referendum? The measure was passed by the House of Representatives without consulting the people, and the people have submitted to it in a most remarkable degree. These are instances in which such matters have not been submitted to the people by way of a referendum, and I know of no instance whatever where any party in any Parliament in any country has asked that the question of conscription be submitted to the people, by way of a referendum, as the leader of the Opposition is asking here to-day. I would like to read a few of the provisions of the United States Bill and compare it with the Bill before the House. Under the United States Act the president is empowered to raise 500,000 men:

Such draft as herein provided shall be based upon liability to military service of all male citizens, or male persons not alien enemies who have declared their intention to become citizens, between the ages of twenty-one and thirty years, both inclusive, and shall take place and be maintained under such regulations as the President may prescribe not inconsistent with the terms of this Act.

The quotas for the several states, territories and the District of Columbia or subdivisions thereof, shall be determined in proportion to the population thereof and credit shall be given to any state, territory, district, or subdivision thereof for the number of men who were in military service of the United States as members of the National Guard on April 1, 1917, or who have since that date entered the military service of the United States from any such territory, district or subdivision either as members of the regular army or the National Guard.

According to these provisions every state in the Union must contribute its quota of the 500,000 men. But the Act goes further than that. It says:

Notwithstanding the exemptions enumerated herein each state, territory, and the District of Columbia shall be required to supply its quota in the proportion that its population bears to the total population of the United States.

So notwithstanding disabilities or anything else each state must supply its quota according to population. The exemptions are as follows:

The Vice President of the United States, the officers legislative, executive and judicial of the United States and of the several states, territories and the District of Columbia, regular or duly ordained ministers of religion, students who at the time of the approval of this Act are preparing for the ministry in recognized theological or divinity schools.

These exemptions are not mentioned in our Bill but are left to the good sense of the Boards of Selection. The President of the United States is given the right to ex-