

I offered my services to Colonel Mignault, who had been asked to form a general French Canadian recruiting committee throughout Canada. I said to him: "We French Canadians in Ottawa and vicinity are ready to continue to do our best." I might mention here that there is no district in Canada where the people of any nationality have enlisted in such large numbers in proportion to the population, and have gone over and fought, as the French Canadians in the district of Ottawa. I do not care what the Government returns show; I know that myself, because I know the people. Colonel Mignault told me that he was very glad of my offer, and asked me if I would take charge of things in Ottawa and do something, and I said I would—that I would get our friends on this local committee and see what we could do. The committee was formed, and I was appointed chairman. There were Conservatives and Liberals on it, all French Canadians, and we begged and begged the Department of Militia to give us the necessary recognition and the forms to use and send out. We subscribed a considerable sum of money, but never could we get the slightest kind of satisfaction from the Department of Militia. Yet we are told that the French Canadians won't enlist, that they are slackers and poltroons and cowards. I could give many more similar instances, but the time is too short.

My position in regard to this war has been clear, definite, and unhesitating from the very start. To my conception, and it was a very early conception, the struggle is one of democracy against autocracy in Europe, and against militarism all over the world. Whatever may have been the origin, the cause or the object of the war, it appeared very clear to me from the outset that, if Germany did win in this war it would mean the absolute rule of militarism over the world; and I at once realized that of all the countries in the world a young and growing democracy such as Canada would be hampered, would be strangled, and would suffer more than possibly any other nation in the world, with the establishment of militarism. How could Canada live by practising militarism? The only way in which Canada can develop and progress, the only way by which we Canadians of both races can make this country prosperous, is by having nothing whatever to do with militarism. Pacifist as I am, and have been

all my life, and intend to be, and not ashamed to proclaim it, I am in this war to the end, and I believe Canada should do everything it can towards participating therein just because I am a pacifist, and because to me this war is war against war, war against armament; war for peace. No country on the face of the earth is more interested than ours in having the reign of peace established, and to no country is there more danger from having anything to do with militarism. The stake involved in this titanic contest transcends the British Empire, transcends France, and all the Allies. There can be no doubt that the issue is whether this world hereafter is to be ruled by brute force. Our participation in the war does not depend on any constitutional provision, whether of Great Britain or Canada, nor upon tradition, or precedent. Indeed, I go further and say that if all those things stood against Canadian participation, it would still be demanded and justified. To me it is not that we are in this war so much because Great Britain is in it, with all her strength and determination, or because France is in it, with all her soul and incomparable valour and genius, as because of the issue involved, as I have just described it. It is not so much the Union Jack or the Tricolor, or even both, that are our inspiration and our guide, as the ideal for which they stand with the flags of Belgium and the other Allies. The "sacred union," as it has been properly called, may and probably will not last forever, but the cause for the triumph of which it labours is one in which all the world, Canada included, has a supreme and permanent interest. If Germany should win, militarism would become and remain the absolute master of the world. There is no considerable difference of opinion between Ontario and Quebec, or in this country generally in that regard. My French Canadian friends of the province of Quebec, like those of Ontario, have the same conception of this war as you and I have. They are willing to do their share; they have been willing all along, and would have done it; only, in the light of what you have heard from honourable gentlemen on this side, it cannot be denied that they have not been given the opportunity, or allowed or encouraged or assisted to serve the country in the way in which they should have been.

I admit that there are some in the province of Quebec, as in other provinces, who