

in the spirit in which it is offered. It is presented from a sense of duty and with no desire or intention of interfering with the legitimate rights of any of the citizens of this country. It is inspired by the sincere belief that in truth we are fighting a battle which involves the destiny of Canada and of the whole world, by the strong conviction that the protection of our country, its citizens, their liberties and their heritage, depends upon the success of our efforts.

I trust that the debate will be characterized by a sense of the grave responsibilities which thus devolve upon this Parliament and upon the people. I hope that it will be conducted with fairness and moderation, with no angry word or taunt, so that those who come after may know that the men of this day and generation representing the Canadian people in their Parliament, were animated by ideals and inspired by motives far above the paltry and insignificant considerations of lesser days. I hope that this measure will be so received that those who are holding the trenches beyond the seas, fighting for our security and our liberty, may realize that their trust in us is not in vain. This afternoon there are 125,000 Canadians pressing back the invaders in France and Belgium. Let us prove ourselves worthy to call them comrades. Some may have made the supreme sacrifice for Canada even as we speak. Let us summon in thought these brave comrades, firm of heart and strong of purpose, those who have fought, yes and those who shall fight no more, let us summon them in the spirit to our deliberations, let us speak and determine as if they were in our midst.

Right hon. Sir WILFRID LAURIER: Mr. Speaker, as the rules of the House do not permit at this stage a full discussion of the principle which is involved in this Bill, I shall have to content myself with simply making one observation. My right hon. friend has expressed the hope that this debate shall be characterized by frankness and moderation. I can assure him that on this side of the House his wish in that respect will be fully gratified. Whatever we may say as to the measure now before the House we shall say as befits members of the House of Commons and as free British citizens, and if we have to differ, we shall differ more in sorrow than in anger. I appreciate what my right hon. friend has said that the duties that devolve upon him are of great magnitude. Perhaps he will allow me to say that the duties that devolve upon me are as important in one

[Sir Robert Borden.]

way as are his own; and perhaps he will allow me to tell him that the position which I hold, and which I may have to defend, may be perhaps involved in more difficulties than those which he has to meet. I say no further to-day. I have only one request to make. My right hon. friend refers to matters which he is to lay before the House. He states that before the second reading of the Bill, when discussion will really commence, he will place on the Table the statistics of which he has spoken, but which he did not give, of the number of available men between the ages of twenty and forty-five. I hope he will give that statement to the House in ample time, before we take up the second reading of the Bill.

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: I shall endeavour to do it at the earliest possible moment.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD (Pictou): Would my right hon. friend (Sir Robert Borden) be good enough to say, if he can at this stage, whether it will be the policy of the Government to provide, by amendment of this Bill or otherwise, for registration of the people by statute similar to that passed in the United States?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: The provision to which I have alluded is the only provision the Government has in contemplation at present.

Mr. MACDONALD: May I ask if there will be a statutory definition of the words "national interest" used in section 11 of the Bill, or whether the interpretation of the meaning will be left to the different local boards?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: There is provision that regulations may be made for the purpose of securing uniformity in the application of the Act; but the point has only been taken into consideration in that way.

Mr. MACDONALD: And there will be no statutory definition?

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: It is not in contemplation at the moment. I shall be glad to hear the suggestions of my hon. friend (Mr. Macdonald) or of any other hon. member as to that. At present we have not in contemplation a statutory definition, but we have provided that regulations may be made for the purpose of securing uniformity in the application of the Act. There is a similar provision in the British Act.

Mr. PUGSLEY: In the statistics to be given, showing the number of men avail-