

will stand with Great Britain to the last man. I really think we ought to know what that means. I listened for two or three hours, as did other hon. members, to try to gain some idea of what "cooperation" means, and I confess I am absolutely at a loss. I do not know—and I think I have the average intelligence of the average Canadian citizen. I do not know.

There is only one point on which we have been enlightened, apparently, and that is that we are not going to have conscription—at least, not at present. We will not have conscription. Are we to send an expeditionary force to Europe? We do not know. I do not know whether the government does, or not—but we do not know that. It is important that we should know it.

We do not know whether or not wealth is to be conscripted. If we are to stand to the very last man, wealth should be conscripted in this country, and in my opinion wealth should be conscripted before men are conscripted. We should know all these things.

It is all very well for the Prime Minister to talk about cooperating in carrying on the affairs of a war. It is all very well for him to talk about the policy of the government. But we in this house have a right to know—and I had hoped that we would hear from the Prime Minister what we did not learn in the governor general's speech—what the policy of the government is.

In the old days I used to hear a great many condemnations of the blank cheque, but in the speech to-day we are asked to give a blank cheque to the government. So far the Prime Minister has not enlightened us in any detail as to what the policy of the government is to be. In fact I was almost tempted, during certain portions of his speech, to think that after all war would be to Canadians a blessing in disguise, because through it we would be able to sell more goods to Great Britain and make more money, and that we would all be happy ever after.

I do not say that this is the idea the Prime Minister has in mind, but I want to put it in that way to emphasize to him that the people of this country have been looking forward eagerly to this session of parliament to find out what the policy of the government is going to be, and I think they will be sadly disappointed when they have learned nothing more than we have heard to-day.

To-night I find myself in rather an anomalous position. My own attitude towards war is fairly well known to the members of the house and, I think, throughout the country. My views on war became crystallized during the last war, long before the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation came into exist-

[Mr. Woodsworth.]

ence, but our Cooperative Commonwealth Federation is a democratic organization that decides matters of policy. My colleagues in the house and in the national council of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, which has been in session with us almost continuously for the last two days, have very generously urged that I take this opportunity of expressing my own opinions with regard to this matter.

The position of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation will be stated at the earliest possible opportunity by one of my colleagues. I say frankly that with part of that policy I heartily agree, but with some portions of it I cannot agree. Yet I was never so proud to belong to the group with which I am associated. In the time at my disposal to-night I shall try to give expression to my own personal views with regard to the war, to give my interpretation of the situation that exists to-day and perhaps suggest some things that should be done. From the scores of telegrams, letters and communications of various kinds that have come to me in the last few days, and from my own knowledge of the Canadian people, I feel confident that there are thousands upon thousands who hold very much the views which I do.

In my judgment an individual citizen in a democracy, and much more a representative of the citizens, can make his greatest contribution by expressing his own convictions as clearly as possible. I am trying to do that to-night. I consider that a great many of my colleagues in this house belonging to all parties are quite sincere in the policies which they advocate. I do not question their patriotism. Perhaps I am going too far when I ask them to believe that I and others who feel like I do are sincere in our convictions and are no less interested in the welfare of this country.

Before I pass on, the first question I should like to ask is this: Is it possible for us to know whether or not Canada is at war to-night? I have consulted with legal friends, many of whom are constitutional lawyers, and some tell me one thing while others tell me another. I had thought that when we came to this house we were at war and that nothing could alter that state of affairs, but as I listened to the Prime Minister to-night I began to feel that we were not at war and were not likely to be at war in the technical sense. I had rather thought that when we came to Ottawa we would have had placed before us in the form of a resolution a definite declaration of war. If we are not at war, is it proposed that we should go into war with-