

If to hold us together he has compromised, attempting to hold the scales in balance between us, let us thank whatever gods we profess (and most of the leaders of the anti-King clique have no god but Mammon) that we have a leader who cherishes the unity of Canada, for without unity we perish, even in the hour of victory.

I agree very much with what he says.

At the beginning of this debate the hon. member for Cartier (Mr. Rose) placed on record the position taken by the Labour Progressive party on this issue. As a member of that party I wish to endorse all that he has said, and in calling attention to the contributions made to the war by the people of the province of Quebec I also wish to associate myself with his remarks.

What I am going to say now I naturally say as a westerner and as a member from Saskatchewan, but the more I think about these things the more I realize the similarity between the people all over this country, never mind which province they happen to live in.

Western Canada is very proud of its contribution to this war in food for victory. Besides the thousands of volunteers who have gone from the prairies we had until quite recently about 13,800 draftees. Let me give the house one or two reasons why we had this number. In one part of my country where we have no railways and where the roads are so bad that you cannot travel after a rainy spell, there was in a little town a young blacksmith and an acetylene welder. He had not volunteered because he was needed so desperately in that part of the country for repairing farm implements. Finally he was drafted, and after he was drafted the people of the district sent a petition to me asking if I could get him exempted for a while, because the only other place they could get their implements mended by an acetylene welder was twenty-five or thirty miles away. Therefore I wrote to the board in Saskatchewan and got him an exemption for a while. He went back, and soon afterwards I received a letter from a woman who lived in that district. She was very bitter. She said, "My three sons have already gone, and now this boy is allowed to come back." What hurt her so badly was this: she said, "that boy got the priest of his village to telephone to Ottawa to get all the French-Canadian members to have him exempted." It was I who got his exemption, and I am neither a priest nor French-speaking. But her anxiety and concern over her three boys, and the injustice which she felt because three of hers had gone away, while some also were

kept on the farms, were canalized into race hatred and religious prejudice. I regretted it terribly.

I know of a couple of Ukrainian lads who had been the sole workers on their farms ever since they left school, because their fathers were old and unable to work. They did not volunteer. Their families could not live without them. Finally they received notices to be drafted and attend for their medical examinations. They went to the reeve of the village and said, "If we leave home our families will starve; what can we do?" The reeve of that particular area was an English-speaking man. This was after March 22, 1942. Those boys should have been frozen on the farms; they were eligible for such treatment; but the reeve is one of those English-speaking people who used to say, "Let those darned foreigners go; why should our boys fight, while they hide on the farms?"

These things are very bad. I am sorry that among a certain section of our English-speaking people there is a tendency to consider they are a little superior if they think as Britishers, when they should realize that their greatest duty, no, not their duty, their greatest privilege should be to think first and always as Canadians. Only a small percentage of them are involved in this kind of thing, but they have stirred up antagonism and prevented many a good boy from volunteering.

Of course these things are the result of mistakes in government policy for which the cabinet must take full responsibility. I am not trying to absolve the government from blame. The Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) has made mistakes, so has Mr. Roosevelt, so has Mr. Churchill. Churchill is making an awful mistake right now in interfering in Greece and in Belgium. But I say with confidence that if the democratic forces in any country are sufficiently strong and vigilant and courageous, they can and will correct the mistakes of leaders. That can be done. We must blame ourselves to some extent if in our war effort there have been inequalities and injustices which have provided fertile ground for those who now seek to stir up disunity in this country for their own political ends.

I regret as much as any French-speaking person in this country the slanderous attacks which have been made upon the people of the province of Quebec during this crisis, and I want the French-speaking people of Canada to know there are many English-speaking people in this country whose greatest desire is to persist in trying to keep alive and build the unity of our two great nations into a greater