

When the plebiscite was announced, many did not understand what it was on which they were going to be asked to express an opinion. Many thought that conscription was the question to be decided. In other words, they believed that the government was placing on the people the responsibility of deciding the issue of conscription, instead of assuming that responsibility itself, and making its own recommendation to parliament.

It has now been made clear that conscription is not the issue. Let me emphasize that fact. Those who tell you that conscription is the issue are misleading you. The sole purpose of the plebiscite is to obtain for the government, and for parliament, a perfectly free hand in dealing with this, ~~as well as~~ with all other questions. All you are being asked to say is whether or not you are in favour of the government's hands being perfectly free at this time of war. That is the meaning of the question to which you are being asked to reply YES or NO. If you reply YES, you will not be committing the government to conscription for service overseas; ^{but} you will be enabling the government and parliament to discuss and decide that question solely on its merits. Members of the government and members of parliament will no longer be suspected of