

CAN AUSTRALIA WIN THE WAR?

To hear conscriptionists talk, you'd think that the winning of the war depended on the adoption of military compulsion in this country.

They paint the situation of the Allies black in the extreme. They revel in gloomy forebodings; they spoil the sleep of timid people with their prognostications of disaster.

And they declare that conscription in Australia is therefore absolutely necessary to save the world from the Prussian yoke.

The logic is not convincing. Their premises are appalling, but the conclusion they draw from them is merely **RIDICULOUS.**

The few additional men that conscription would yield in this Commonwealth **COULD NOT MATERIALLY AFFECT THE FINAL ISSUE OF THE WAR.**

Though every conscript were a hero, though he had the brawn of a giant and the brain of a general, the greatest number that conscription could give us would not suffice to make our acceptance of this method the deciding factor in the struggle.

Yet we are asked to act upon the assumption that unless the Australian is driven into the firing zone the Empire is lost and civilisation in danger of perishing in its own blood!

The argument fizzles out in futility as soon as it is examined. Even with Russia excluded, the Allies have a vast numerical superiority over the Central Powers. And America, to make up for the possible Russian defection, **IS RAPIDLY TRAINING 2,000,000 MEN**, and she can get them to Europe in **ONE-SIXTH THE TIME** it takes to transport men from Australia.

Such being the case, why squander a large sum of money in the attempt to get the Australian people to reverse a decision they gave but twelve months ago?

Why raise again this disintegrating question? Why **REND THE NATION ASUNDER**, and sow the poison seeds of dissension and hatred?

Why **VIOLATE THE SANCTITY OF THE HUMAN BODY**, and treat as an accursed thing the conscience of man, when by these barbarous measures no compensating advantage can be secured on the battlefields?

Conscription in Australia cannot make up for the failure of Russia; it cannot stem the invasion of Italy.

It can only divide the country against itself, jeopardise its industries—**SO ESSENTIAL TO THE SAFETY OF THE ALLIED NATIONS**—and embitter every social relation of its citizens.

Vote "NO" on December 20th

That they who fight for Liberty shall themselves be free.

[Written by Henry E. Boote, St. Andrew's-place Sydney.]

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CAN YOU TRUST THIS MAN?

Addressing a meeting of business men in Melbourne last August, W. M. Hughes said:—

HE CONSIDERED THAT THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF OBTAINING RECRUITS WAS THE BEST THAT COULD BE ADOPTED IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES. THE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT WAS NO CONSCRIPTION.

Surely that statement was definite enough for anything. Surely amongst men in the habit of accepting a man's word as his bond, that declaration would be taken as **FINAL**.

But now, three short months later, W. M. Hughes comes along and **REPUDIATES** the Hughes who spoke with such directness!

Now, if Hughes so completely broke his word in the last three months, **WHAT MIGHT HE DO IN THE MONTHS TO COME?**

Remember that there are no specific pledges made on the ballot paper. It is nothing more nor less than a **BLANK CHEQUE**.

Any pledges or promises made are merely verbal ones, coming from W. M. Hughes—from the man who, three months ago, declared that the voluntary system was **THE BEST**, and that **NO CONSCRIPTION WAS THE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT!**

If it be urged on Hughes's behalf that altered circumstances were responsible for his repudiation of his Melbourne speech of last August, what guarantee have we that alleged altered circumstances won't cause him to repudiate the exemptions he promised at Bendigo last Monday night?

If his pledges are subject to ever-changing circumstances, then they are no pledges at all, since, in the very nature of things, the circumstances of to-morrow cannot be the same as to-day.

In effect Hughes says: "Here, sign this blank cheque. I promise to draw on your account to the extent of £1000, but if altered circumstances demand it, I will draw to the extent of £10,000 or more. **AND I, BILLY HUGHES, AM TO BE THE SOLE JUDGE OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES.**"

Where is the commercial man who would do business on such haphazard lines?

And surely, since flesh and blood are more sacred than mere money, the people of Australia will not take chances that a business man would refuse.

Besides, Hughes has been responsible for too many political infamies to be trusted now.

WE MUST JUDGE HIM BY HIS PAST.

And the moment we do that he stands irretrievably condemned.

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