

TO KILL REFUSING

BRISTOL'S WORLD WAR 1 CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

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THE C.O.'S HANSARD

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FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING JUNE 25

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HOUSE OF COMMONS PROPOSAL TO DISFRANCHISE C.O.'S

Tuesday, 26th June, 1917.

MR. R. McNEILL, speaking on the Representation of the Peoples Bill, said: I beg to move, after the words last inserted, to insert the words: "A person shall not be entitled to be registered or to vote at a Parliamentary or local government election if he has been exempted on the ground of conscientious objection to military service from any form of military service for which, but for such objection, he would have been liable."

I see some hon. Members have put down an Amendment to my Amendment. There is nothing in that Amendment which, so far as I am concerned, I should not be willing to accept. I am glad to see that those three hon. Members (Mr. Denman, Mr. Frederick Whyte, and Commander Wedgwood) have included in their disqualification the conscientious objector to combatant service, which is the same as in my Amendment, and I therefore can claim the support of those hon. Members. I do not make any sort of charge or insinuation as regards, first of all, the physical courage of conscientious objectors. I do not do so for two very good reasons. First, because I do not think any of us have any evidence which would justify any such charge, and, secondly, and still more strongly, I think such a charge or such an insinuation could only be made by a man who has himself shared in the horrors and perils of this war. Certainly a man like