

The Imperial dictionary gives this derivation of the word demagogue:

Demos, the people, and agagos, a leader, from 'ago' to lead.

Then it gives these definitions:

1. A leader of the people; a person who sways the people by his oratory.

2. An unprincipled factious orator; one who acquires influence with the populace by pandering to their prejudices or playing on their ignorance.

An hon. MEMBER: That is the one.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Well, I do not know that in my remarks about secrecy I was pandering to any prejudices or playing upon any ignorance. So it must have been the first of these definitions that my right hon. friend had in mind.

The next authority I consulted was Murray's New English dictionary, where I find the following:

Demagogue: a popular leader, a leader of the mob.

1. In ancient times, a leader of the people; a popular leader or orator who espoused the cause of the people against any other party in the state.

Well, I am quite prepared to accept that designation as applicable; but there is another definition given by Murray:

2. In bad sense: a leader of a popular faction, or of a mob; a political agitator who appeals to the passions and prejudices of the mob in order to obtain power or further his own interests.

To be perfectly sure that this was a correct interpretation I looked up yet another dictionary, Webster's New International dictionary, 1928, and I found very much the same definition:

1. A leader or orator popular with, or identified with the people.

2. One who plays an insincere role in public life for the sake of gaining political influence or office; a poser in politics.

An hon. MEMBER: That is right.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: The hon. gentleman evidently recognizes the bearing. Let me give the remainder of the second definition:

—one who panders to popular prejudice or seeks to inflame reasonless passions in the advancement of his personal interests.

Well, when I read the last definition, I thought, like hon. gentlemen opposite, of some of the things which the Prime Minister, their own leader, had said during the course of the recent campaign, and I decided to look them up again to see whether they did not fit exactly into the class of utterances referred to in that definition.

How did my right hon. friend the present Prime Minister begin his campaign? Speaking of the personnel of the late government in his opening meeting at Winnipeg, this is what he said:

This group of mercenaries, holding office by sham and subterfuge, look upon them as treacherous to you, self-confessed, deserving of your passionate condemnation.

Speaking in the city of Regina on June 10, according to the Leader Post of June 11, my right hon. friend said:

They play with the lives of men and women. What for? Do they realize there are lives that they are playing with, food for wives and children, hunger? Nine years of wasted effort before the great betrayal. It did not take Judas that long.

It did not take Judas that long! And that is the right hon. gentleman who as we have seen to-day, is so sensitive when anyone expresses anything in the way of adverse comment with respect to himself.

At Regina on June 10 we get a note that we have become more familiar with of late; a certain evangelical tone! He said:

There is a good time coming. We may not live to see it, but there is a good time coming. I came to call the sinners, not the righteous.

There must have been a rush for the platform at that moment.

At Vancouver on June 18, he said, and, mark you, this is the way in which my right hon. friend gained the position which he occupies to-day:

However blind he may be to your future—

He is referring to myself.

—and deaf to your present needs, surely he cannot stop his ears with smug complacency and self-esteem to the cry that carries across the nation—the cry of the destitute and hungry, the cry of mothers and fathers and little children who call to us as Christians and as Canadians to heal their pain.

Of a meeting at Regina, again on June 10, I find this report in the Toronto Globe of the following day:

Mr. Bennett spoke of the sense of responsibility which seized him in the position he now occupied. Canada was blessed with great natural resources, he proceeded, but yet we find something which saddens my heart to-day. I meet men wearing the white buttons and all they ask for is the chance to work. Think what it is to have a wife and children and all you men ask is a chance for employment.

Then at Victoria, according to the Colonist of June 17th, my right hon. friend said:

You have my promise that if the Conservative party is returned to power that as soon after July 28 as possible parliament will be called together to deal with the problem of unemployment by providing, not doles, but work. Men and women of this country want work, not charity.