

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

SUBJECT

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16525

NAME AND DATE OF NEWSPAPER

Toronto Mail Empire April 9/30

**THE UNEMPLOYED HEAR THE FIAT
OF A RUTHLESS PARTISAN.**

That Premier King's declaration that he would not give a five-cent piece to any Conservative Government was made in cold blood is to be assumed from the fact that it was loudly and defiantly uttered and then deliberately repeated. When the exclamation of "Shame!" burst from many members of the House he coolly asked what there was to be ashamed of. The outraged sense of decency expressed by scores of protesting members made no impression upon him. He brazened the scene through. In The Globe's view, the amazing statement of the premier was saved from being "inexcusable" by the provoking behavior of the Conservative Opposition. We wish our contemporary had as much respect for the truth as it has fidelity to its party's leader. The Conservative Opposition had nothing to do with the resolution in the discussion of which he made his shameful remark. That resolution was proposed by one of the two Labor members for Winnipeg, and it was most strongly supported by the other of the Labor members for that city. So the organ lapses from the truth when it tries to make its readers believe that the Premier had been nagged into a choleric spell by the Conservative Opposition.

How cruel to Mr. King is the conduct of the Conservative Opposition made to appear by being presented in this utterly false light! Worse than that, they are accused of trying to make capital out of the appeals for aid to the unemployed. The Conservative members of the House would indeed be a bad lot if they had so little human feeling, so little regard for their responsibilities, as to try to make political capital out of the suffering and disheartenment of the men, women and children who are cut off from the wages fund. It was not necessary for The Globe to resort to this mean attempt to blacken the Conservative Opposition, made up, as it is, of good citizens who have feelings of compassion for people in their own country who are not afforded either the employment or the aid necessary for a living. Nobody would make so mean an insinuation against the body of Liberal members of the House. We take it for granted that most of the private members who took part in the discussion of the question of providing aid for the unemployed would be above putting party expediency before the pressing needs of the unemployed.

We gather from The Globe's way of discussing the premier's bigoted and uncharitable statement that the organ thinks he should be an object of sympathy, goaded, as it would have its readers believe, by the Conservative Opposition into uncontrolled fury. Not a word has the organ for the coldness he showed to the thousands who are waiting for aid from some quarter, aid which the premier could not be moved to grant them, one of his excuses being that to do so he would have to hand out money to the provincial Governments, which, in so far as these Governments are Conservative, he declared he would not do to the extent of even five cents. The unemployed will have to muddle through, so far as Mr. King is concerned, because, as he pretends, of his rancor against Conservatives. Hon. Charles Stewart, evidently with the purpose of easing the situation, says that the question of unemployment will be taken up at the provincial conference on the subject of immigration next June. That is all the comfort held out to the unemployed by the King Government. How they will fare in the meantime, especially in the provinces ruled by Conservatives, is apparently of no concern to Premier King.

W. L. Mackenzie King Papers

Speeches-1922 - 1932

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