

It will seek in industrial relations as opportunity offers, to give to workers and consumers a larger share in the government of industry.

Then I come to what has grown to be an even more urgent matter of policy, the restoration of responsible government, a reform which is becoming increasingly important.

The Liberal party believes that the present crisis has been made an excuse for the usurpation of the rights of parliament and the assumption of autocratic powers by the executive. Liberalism stands, as always, for the principle of a free parliament, and for the supremacy of parliament. To this end it would repeal the legislation enacted by the present administration, which deprives parliament of its control over expenditures and taxation, and invests the executive with unwarranted arbitrary powers, as for example:

(1) legislation permitting the executive to enact measures by order in council for peace, order and good government, and

(2) legislation providing the executive with a "blank cheque" for expenditures of any kind.

And equally and increasingly important our policy with respect to the reassertion of personal liberty:

The Liberal party believes that under the excuse of the present crisis, the rights of the individual have been violated. Liberalism stands, as always, for the British principle of free speech and free association, and to this end will repeal section 98 of the Criminal Code, and end the present practice of arbitrary deportation.

Then there is the party policy with respect to electoral reform, a timely subject in view amongst other things of costly expenditures for radio purposes, especially nation-wide broadcasts:

The Liberal party stands for electoral laws which will ensure a true parliamentary representation of the Canadian people, and such legislation as may help to reduce the cost of election campaigns.

Finally I come to what I regard as next to our trade policies the most important of all, our policies with respect to the more equitable distribution of wealth, which covers the matter of social legislation:

The Liberal party recognizes that the problem of distribution has become more important than that of production, and believes that personality is more sacred than property. It will devote itself to finding ways and means of effecting a fair and just distribution of wealth with increasing regard to human need, to the furtherance of social justice, and to the promotion of the common good.

Let me repeat these statements of policy are not statements put forward in a speech from the throne in the present year. They are not something which has been sent broadcast by means of the radio within the past few weeks. They are policies upon which all the by-elections to which I have referred have been fought.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: They are policies amongst others upon which the general election will be fought.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: There are other policies with which at the present time I have not time to mention.

The point above all others to be considered at the moment is this: In view of the circumstances with which we are confronted, what should be the attitude of the Liberal party? We are informed that there can be no general election until April 15, unless as a result of what has been said this afternoon and this evening the government should change its mind; I trust it will. At any rate, we have all been summoned and are now assembled together in parliament. I do not propose to move any amendment which might protract or delay proceedings, but I do propose to suggest to the Prime Minister and hon. gentlemen opposite that we should lose as little time as we possibly can in taking into consideration all these measures of social reform which are so urgent. We have been called together to consider these matters; we have been told over the radio by the Prime Minister that the main purpose of this session is the reform of the capitalist system, and the enactment before its close of the measures necessary to this end.

Well then, let us see if we cannot manage at least that much. Let the government come forward with their measures. If the measures are of a character which are likely to ameliorate and improve conditions in any effective way, I can say immediately that they will receive the very hearty support of hon. gentlemen on this side of the house. But we will reserve to ourselves the right to consider very carefully on its merits every single measure, and every provision of every bill. We do not propose, under the guise of legislation to help the working classes, to have further reactionary legislation passed by this House of Commons, or to allow the government to put through legislation of a character which is going to make more difficult than ever the solution of the great problems with which the country is faced.

As a means of expediting and hastening the consideration of these matters, I would ask the Prime Minister when he gets up to speak this evening, as I hope he will, to tell this house whether as leader of the government, knowing that a question will come up immediately as to the jurisdiction of this parliament and of the provincial legislatures in matters of social legislation, he has secured