

two so different in character and in personnel that it is presumption, to say the least, for my right hon. friend to assume that he is entitled to any credit for work which the previous Government carried on, or to any continuance of confidence from the people of Canada as a result.

May I ask my right hon. friend this question, and I hope he will answer it—Does he believe that if he himself had been called upon to form a Unionist Administration in 1917, he would have been able to do it? Does he mean to say that if he instead of the ex-Prime Minister had gone before the country as Prime Minister seeking support for a ministry at that time that the people would have given to him the confidence which was given to the late Prime Minister and the colleagues he had about him? Unless he is prepared to stand up and say that he was just as capable of forming a ministry as the ex-Prime Minister and that the people have just as much confidence in him and his present colleagues as in the ex-Prime Minister and the group that surrounded him, by what authority does he presume to carry on government, as one holding the confidence of the people of this country?

But, Sir, not only is the character and the personnel of the ministry changed, as I have described, but what is most important of all, the aims and purposes of the two ministries are entirely different. The Unionist Administration went before the people of this country as a war Administration, for the purpose of carrying on the war and dealing with the problems of the war. Will my right hon. friend say that this is a war Administration? Unless he is prepared to say that he is entitled to the confidence of the people of this country at the present time as the leader of a war Administration, by what authority does he presume to carry on the Government of this country?

I might quote at considerable length from the statements which were given to the people of this country at the time as to the purposes of the late ministry. I shall not take up the time of the House in quoting at any great length from the different statements made; two or three will, I think, be pertinent enough. As to the purpose of the previous Unionist Administration, I shall quote only from the ex-Prime Minister (Sir Robert Borden), who formed that Government, and from my right hon. friend who is leading the Government at the present time, and I will ask my hon. friend after

he has listened to these statements, to be good enough to say whether he is prepared to stand up in this Parliament and affirm that the ministry (which he is leading to-day is the same in aim and purpose as the ministry which was formed in 1917.

Here are one or two statements made by the ex-Prime Minister at the time the Unionist Administration was formed. Speaking at Toronto on November 21st, 1917—the quotation will be found in the Mail and Empire of the following day—the then Prime Minister, the present member for Kings, said:

My purpose in forming a Union Government was to bring within it such a personnel as would be thoroughly representative of all those elements of the population of Canada that were willing to stand behind the Government in its efforts to win this war, and to fight the battle for humanity, for civilization and the fate of the world.

Speaking at Oshawa on Nov. 26, 1917, as quoted from the Toronto Globe of the following date, the ex-Prime Minister (Sir Robert Borden) said:

Union Government—does any man know of any reason why there should not be union and national unity in this country when national peril confronts us? The issue is whether the war effort of Canada is to be maintained, or whether Canada is to get out of this war. That is the issue.

That was what the right hon. the then Prime Minister of this country told the people at the time of the last election. He distinctly stated that the issue was whether the war effort of Canada was to be maintained or whether Canada was to get out of the war. Can my right hon. friend who is now leading the Government (Right Hon. Arthur Meighen) describe the issue before the country at the present time in those terms? Can he find anything which will justify him in maintaining an administration on the basis on which the Unionist Government was returned at the last election?

Speaking at Milton on November 29, 1917, as will be seen from the Toronto Star of November 30, my right hon. friend the member for Kings, the then Prime Minister, made a statement which is to be found quoted in several papers. I shall quote from two because they are significant:

“There is only one issue after all in this campaign,” said Sir Robert, “whether we shall keep our pledge or bond given to those men at the front, or whether we shall abandon them when they need our help most”.

I will ask my right hon. friend to pay particular attention to these words, which are taken from the Toronto Star: