

endeavoured deliberately to defraud the country. But the fraud was on the municipalities and the provinces, and when the provinces found it out they took the necessary steps to expose it. So far as our accounts are concerned adjustments immediately followed, because we are in the happy position of being able to retain moneys which by investigation it is found have been improperly paid to the provinces, it being remembered that the cheque of the dominion goes to the provinces and not to the municipalities. Therefore, as between the provinces and ourselves, any difficulty of that kind can be overcome.

There is another matter to which I was rather surprised the right hon. gentleman referred. He read from section 7 of the bill now before the house, and if he had taken the trouble to look at the interpretation act he would have found that the section in this measure is that found in all such statutes. It merely provides that anything which has been done by regulation, before it has been repealed shall not be vitiated by reason of the repeal. It is a standing rule of interpretation in our statutes. The section is as follows:

All orders and regulations of the governor in council made hereunder shall have the force of law and may be varied, extended or revoked by any subsequent order or regulation; but if any order or regulation is varied, extended or revoked, neither the previous operation thereof nor anything duly done thereunder shall be affected thereby, nor shall any right, privilege, obligation or liability acquired, accrued, accruing or incurred thereunder be affected by any such variation, extension or revocation.

It is true that the right hon. gentleman is not a member of the legal profession, but he has had a wide experience, and he graduated in law. He knows well, or should know, that that provision is found in the revised statutes of our country, and is a rule in interpretation which has statutory force and effect. It has to be included in all matters of this kind. Wherever a statute provides that regulations shall be made under its provisions, this clause is inserted to protect those who act under the regulation before it has been either amended, revoked or altered. That is all there is to it.

But, much as was my surprise that the right hon. gentleman should make such observations as he did with respect to section 7, I confess I cannot understand why he should have suggested to this House of Commons the possibility that under the provision for peace, order and good government we could extend the lifetime of parliament. Who knows better than he does that that is in the British North America Act; who knows better than he does that that is an imperial statute; who

knows better than he does that a delegated power conferred upon an executive can never be higher than the power granted to the parliament which confers it. As this parliament itself could not extend its lifetime, except under the provisions set forth in the British North America Act, it did seem to me to be playing rather small politics to suggest to the people of Canada that under the provision for peace, order and good government this government could extend the lifetime of parliament. I think that careful—shall I say thoughtful—people who read that statement will place a great discount on everything which the right hon. gentleman has said. For it cannot be suggested that anything is added by way of argument when one suggests something which every hon. member in this house knows cannot be done by this parliament itself, much less by the executive, under a delegated power.

Then the other suggestion was that we had taken the power to disallow provincial legislation, under the grant of power to legislate for peace, order and good government. There again it must be obvious to even the most thoughtless member—if there are any, and I trust there are not—that it would not be possible for us to exercise any such power.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I made no reference to disallowing.

Mr. BENNETT: I said it was suggested; I did not say the suggestion was made by the right hon. gentleman. The power of disallowance is in the British North America Act itself, and that statute stands until it is amended by the power which created or enacted it. We cannot amend it; we cannot alter it; we cannot repeal it. The power that is there conferred is a power that this legislation does not touch, nor does this legislation touch any power which is in the constitution to be exercised by the parliament at Westminster, nor does it touch any powers that are conferred by the constitution exclusively upon the legislatures. What it does is, within narrower limits than those suggested by some hon. gentlemen, to confer upon the executive the power to make regulations for the peace, order and good government of the country under conditions in which it may seem necessary to the executive to exercise such power. But those powers as defined by the privy council are much less broad than some hon. gentlemen have suggested. I cannot in the very nature of things make a legal argument to this house showing that the limitations imposed upon the words are far greater than would occur to the ordinary individual not trained in the inter-