

*Relief Act, 1934*

their vote this afternoon have endorsed the right hon. gentleman. They are supposed to represent labour, but they have absolutely reversed and repudiated their position of a few years ago, and given to the executive council of the nation complete and unrestrained powers to go beyond parliamentary authority in dealing with the situation for the next year. Personally, I am proud, prouder than ever to-day, to belong to the great minority in this parliament. I do not want to use the language of exaggeration, but I believe that Canada to-day is, with respect to her liberties, like Rachael weeping for her children because they are not; and the only ones who stood up this afternoon, this gallant minority, in defence of liberty in this land and in parliament were the members of the Liberal party.

I commiserate with Canada upon this new alliance. Here we have a would-be dictatorship of the proletariat in the corner becoming allied with the dictatorship of autocracy and reaction represented by the government. But so far as we are concerned we condemn this measure not only because of its iniquitous provisions, the clause dealing with peace, order and good government, but because of the unlimited, unrestrained powers given to the administration, in which they are supported by the socialists of the house. We condemn the measure because of its extreme features. Let me tell the government something. I speak here to-night with a humble voice on behalf of the liberties of Canada, and I say that the battle for personal liberty, for political liberty and for constitutional liberty will have to be fought once again in Canada. My right hon. friend may find it easy to take a light hold of these powers of autocracy, but some day very soon the people will demand that parliament once again resume control of the powers that are being relinquished in regard to taxation, expenditures and finance.

Mr. MacINNIS: I rather think my dramatic friend from Vancouver Centre (Mr. Mackenzie) spoke a little out of turn. When he referred to Rachael weeping for her children, I wondered whether he was thinking of Patullo and his peace, order and good government legislation in British Columbia. The bill there may not be exactly the same sort of bill as this one, but as regards the assumption of authority it goes this bill fifty per cent better.

Let me make quite clear what our action this afternoon amounts to. During the last week, or possibly the last ten days, the official

[Mr. I. Mackenzie.]

opposition, led by their right hon. leader, have been drawing attention to the words in the bill, in section 2:

Notwithstanding the provisions of any statute or law the governor in council may—

The Prime Minister a few days ago said that he felt there was some merit in the opposition of the Liberal party in objecting to that sweeping word "notwithstanding" and that he would take steps to modify it, and for that purpose he brought in the amendment voted on to-day. Surely when we have a bill before the house and, by some modification of it, the government can improve it we are entitled to vote for the amendment. My hon. friend objects to this, however. He wants to make the bill as bad as possible so that he will have something to speak about. Let me tell him this: We are satisfied that the bill will pass anyway, and since it will pass in any event we want it to be as satisfactory as possible. That is the difference between ourselves and the Liberal opposition. When the bill comes before the house for the final vote the hon. gentleman will find at least one socialist member in this house voting against it.

What has my hon. friend's party done in British Columbia? The hon. gentleman worked hard for that party during the election—mighty hard indeed. He was in British Columbia during the Easter recess and I did not hear him say anything in opposition to the powers assumed by the British Columbia government. Let us see what powers are given by the Special Powers Act. Section 2 provides:

To the full extent to which the powers of the legislature extend thereto, and notwithstanding the provisions of any public or private act of the legislature, the lieutenant-governor in council shall have power to do and to authorize within the province such acts and things and to make and promulgate from time to time such ordinances as he may by reason or in anticipation—

He is not obliged to wait for something to happen; he can anticipate it.

—of any condition, or for the purpose of any matter referred to in the preamble or in this section, consider necessary or advisable in relation to the matters coming within the classes of subjects next hereinafter enumerated, that is to say:

Now let us see what they can do—and considering the past history of the Liberal party, this is rather dangerous legislation. When we consider how that party dealt with Beauharnois, this legislation is something which the people of British Columbia may well view