

understood that in ordinary circumstances this Parliament would have been dissolved last January, at the end of its fifth session, for a sixth session is virtually without precedent.

The successful landing of our troops in Normandy, followed by the lightning drive across France, encouraged hope not only in this country but among all the allied nations that Germany would be forced to give up the struggle some time last autumn. Unhappily that hope was not realized. But to-day the German army is on the run on both the eastern and western fronts, and is disintegrating so rapidly that the Reich may be forced into unconditional surrender within a few weeks—the sooner the better. But even before these decisive events I think the Prime Minister had in mind that the war might have reached such a stage that it would be possible to hold an election early this spring and have the new Parliament assemble in June or July. Two events, however, intervened: first, the invitation to the Government of Canada to attend the San Francisco conference on the 25th of April, to which my honourable friend has referred, and the impending Victory Loan.

In view of the delay that must of necessity now take place in arranging for a general election, the Government decided in their wisdom—and in my opinion they should be commended for it—to summon Parliament for a sixth session, for two particular purposes. The first is to discuss the invitation to attend the San Francisco conference; the second, to pass interim supply to meet war and civil expenditures during the period which must intervene between a general election and the summoning of a new Parliament. I shall not venture to prophesy what changes the next election may bring about in the other House. I have attended quite a number of prorogations, and they are always occasions for sadness, as members who have been associated in legislative work for four or five years take leave of one another. On this occasion that sadness is intensified by the knowledge that some members will not seek re-election, others will fail to secure nomination, and still others will suffer defeat at the polls.

Only by extending the life of this Parliament can an election be postponed, but the Prime Minister's views in this regard are well known. He is strongly opposed to any such extension, in order that the Government may carry on the business of the country, and I fully agree with him. The whole situation should be canvassed in a general election, so that the electorate may have an opportunity of registering its desires. The new Parliament, as my honourable friend has said, will in all proba-

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bility have to lay down policies that may affect Canada for many years to come, because those policies will deal with peace-time problems, the satisfactory solution of which will be of very great importance to this country.

I do not intend to-night to go into the respective merits of Socialism, Conservatism, or Liberalism. They will be discussed on the hustings, and I have implicit confidence in the judgment of the Canadian people.

Hon. Mr. HAIG: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. KING: My honourable friend has stated that the people in his province know more about Socialism than those in any other part of Canada. I happened to be a member of the legislature of British Columbia which met in Victoria in 1903,—

Hon. Mr. HAIG: I said the four western provinces know more about it than any of the other provinces.

Hon. Mr. KING: Then I concur in what my honourable friend has said. I remember very well when I attended the provincial House in Victoria in 1903—forty-two years ago. That was the first parliament of the province in which we had a party government. Sir Richard McBride was returned with a following of twenty-one Conservatives, and the Liberals mustered seventeen members. The member for Nanaimo, a Welshman, knew more about the doctrines of Karl Marx and could preach them better than those who to-day are preaching them in this country. He had six or eight colleagues, all very firm in their beliefs and well able to present them to the legislature. They at that time preached the doctrines that are being preached to-day. I am not so much disturbed by those in Canada who preach Socialism, if they will only stick to their text. Let them tell the people what Socialism means—regimentation and control of industry, banking, and business generally, and that the property of the individual will become the property of the State—and I am confident that our people will reject Socialism.

Hon. Mr. HAIG: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. KING: But if our people are told only that the co-called big interests are to be controlled, they may fail to understand that once the process of socializing our great industrial, commercial and financial institutions is put into effect it will not stop there but will most certainly extend to all private interests, and the people will become merely servants of the State, with freedom only to do what a Socialist government orders them to do.

I have drifted from what I wish to say.