

peoples of Russia, surrender the ambition of remaining or of becoming democracies. It was not until someone began to preach the doctrine that parliamentary methods were not suited to these times; that the constitution was an obstacle to progress; that shorter and swifter methods were necessary to obtain results, even if they involved sweeping aside parliamentary restraints, and over-riding the constitution, that in Europe, parliaments and democracies alike began to disappear. Have we not all heard this very sort of language from Mr. Bennett, Mr. Woodsworth, and Mr. Stevens?

And what has come in the stead of Parliamentary methods? Hitlerism in Germany, Fascism in Italy, Communism in Russia, and in all, the death of democracy. Is that what we wish to see happen in Canada? If not, you will do well to ask yourselves the question, whither have we been tending in the past five years, and whither are we likely to tend, if some of the doctrines being advocated by more than one of the parties appealing to you today, are given countenance in our land?

For my part, I propose to stand or fall upholding, in all things, the parliamentary method of government. I intend to test all policies and all measures by the simple method of asking, whither they tend? If they tend in the direction of monopoly, if they mean more in the way of compulsion, and, above all, if they are not susceptible of the parliamentary method, and, thereby imply dictatorship, I shall feel that the presumption is overwhelmingly against them.

National Government for Plutocracy

That is why, amongst other changes which are being advocated today, I am opposed to the movement in favour

of a so-called national government, either as desirable at the moment, or as something to be effected in the course of the next Parliament. Rightly understood, I believe national government to be but another form of dictatorship, the most subtle of all, perhaps, because its name and its pretensions are so plausible. I do not doubt the sincerity of many of those who are its advocates, but, with all due respect to those who are not advocating it, as undoubtedly some are, from ulterior motives, I do doubt their understanding of government, and of the value of freedom of discussion, of argument, and reason, and persuasion, as being of the very essence of our parliamentary system. Traced to its source—the source that is financing the present movement—it will, I believe, be found that the demand for national government is a last desperate effort on the part of certain persons, enjoying privileges denied to others, to deal with the railways, the tariffs, and taxation, in a manner which will serve to further their own special interests. Under the guise of submerging partisanship, and gaining political unity for public service National Government would seek to do, by a combination of parties, things for which no single party would dare to ask public approval. In plain English, national government, if established at this time, would sacrifice democracy to serve the ends of plutocracy.

In my next two addresses, I shall have more to say of this tendency in the direction of dictatorship and of the effort to silence all those who dare to differ with their neighbours in opinion; more of monopoly, regimentation, and compulsion. I shall set out in such details, as my time will permit, the policies of the Liberal party, and its position with respect to present day problems. My purpose tonight has been to make it clear that, in the opinion of