

What I want to make clear to the house and to the country is this, the time that an election will take place, as to whether this year or next, will depend upon developments which will take place in this parliament or in this country, or in relation to some things which may happen in other parts of the world but which have an immediate bearing upon conditions here. The government will reach its own decision with respect to what in the public interest it deems the best time to make an appeal. However, I will give my hon. friend this promise: the present administration will not continue in office to the last hour of the last day of the last week of the last year that the constitution permits a government to remain, as happened in the case of a government of hon. gentlemen opposite.

Mr. BENNETT: That was in 1896 when they were fighting for the rights of the minority.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: My hon. friend will remember the date.

The leader of the opposition has made certain references to changes which have taken place in the ministry since the last session. Parliament expects a statement to be made at the opening of a session with regard to such changes, and I might as well, in order to fulfil the obligation which rests upon the leader of the house in that particular, take advantage of the moment to state what I imagine already is everywhere known.

I was in western Canada at the time of the death of the late Mr. Robb. As soon as I returned to Ottawa I took up with my colleagues in council the question of a successor to be appointed to fill the position of Minister of Finance. With the warm and hearty cooperation of members of the government I advised His Excellency to call on the Hon. Mr. Dunning, the present Minister of Finance, to fill that position. Mr. Dunning was appointed on November 26, and took office that day. I think I may say that the approval which the country has given that appointment is as wide and general as was the expectation that it would be made.

Some little time ago the Hon. Mr. Forke mentioned to me that if he were some ten years younger nothing would give him the same satisfaction as to be able to continue in the work of the administration, but he hoped at some suitable time I would relieve him of responsibilities which he felt at his years were becoming increasingly onerous. It will be recalled that the Hon. Mr. Forke took office in 1926, and that he has been the head of the Department of Immigration for over three

years. I did not think my hon. friend this afternoon was very chivalrous in his remarks with respect to Mr. Forke. I recall that on a previous occasion he was similarly lacking in chivalry in reference to the same gentleman. May I say this, that I question very much whether any minister in any government has been a more loyal colleague or has discharged his duties more faithfully, more conscientiously, or indeed with more ability and greater human sympathy than did the Hon. Mr. Forke his responsibilities as Minister of Immigration. It was the view of my colleagues in the cabinet generally, and it was my view, that Mr. Forke's services were far too valuable to be lost to the public life of this country, that with the wide experience he has, particularly of agricultural problems, an experience enhanced by the knowledge of national affairs gained by his many years as a member of this house and as an administrator in the cabinet, it was desirable that his place in parliament should be secured for as long a time as might be possible. Accordingly when a vacancy occurred in the senate representation in Manitoba, again with the united good-will of my colleagues, I recommended to His Excellency the appointment of Mr. Forke to the Senate, and at the same time the appointment of a successor in the cabinet to the Minister of Railways and Canals. Mr. Dunning at the time of his appointment to the position of Minister of Finance resigned the portfolio of Minister of Railways and Canals. It was at that time, after conferring with members of the government and with their hearty acquiescence, I recommended to His Excellency the appointment of the present minister, Mr. Crerar, who took office on the 30th of November.

My hon. friend in the course of his remarks this afternoon said something about agriculture; he said it was the most important of all the industries in this country. He now nods his head in approval. Well, amongst other things a signal service has I think been done agriculture by bringing into the present administration one who was minister of agriculture in a former administration and who for a number of years was the leader of the Progressive party in this house, and by conserving for parliament in the upper chamber through years to come the services of the other gentleman who was also a leader of the progressive group in this parliament and that immediately prior to the time he came into this administration. In other words, the administration has succeeded in placing in the two houses of parliament the one to-day in the Senate and the other to-day in the