

in self-government the people have the right to make the issue. No one man has that right. There is the difference between autocracy and democracy. Autocracy says this and this is so and shall be. Mr. Meighen presents that attitude to the people of the country.

"It is 16 years since the people of Canada have had any chance to discuss their own domestic questions. In that time a new generation has grown up. In the election of 1917 the fight was on the one question, the ending of the war. Since 1911 there has been no opportunity of discussing the questions which pertain to matters of domestic policies.

Electorate is Changed.

"In that time the young men of 21 have become 31. These have had no chance to discuss matters of domestic interest. The men overseas in 1917 have come back imbued with larger desires than ever to play their part as citizens. Are they not to be considered in the matters and questions which they might want to have discussed? I might add the most important of all the new group that makes up the electorate of today, the women. Irrespective of any special group they have the right to take their part in the government of the country.

"Why should any man come before the people of Canada and seek to restrict discussions of public questions to one imaginary issue such as protection or free trade? Has the labor of our country to have no right to have the problems of their concern discussed at the present time? Are the returned men to have no right to have questions of interest to them discussed? Are the women to have no right to have the question of the high cost of living discussed at this time? Why are we restricted in this way? We have railway systems taken over without the people being consulted and members of Parliament ignored in regard to the transactions. Have we no right to discuss the question of freight rates and all that relates to transportation?

"The more you think of it, the more arrogant is the attitude of our Prime

Minister in appealing to the people on a single issue, and that, one of his own imagination.

Wants to Forget

"There is a reason why the Prime Minister has chosen the course he has. You do not have to go far to discover it. The reason is that he wants the people to forget about all these questions. He wants them to forget all about his administration and government. Under British parliamentary institutions the custom is when a government has been in office, to come before the people and place its record before them and deal with it. That is just the very thing that Mr. Meighen does not want to do. Speaking last night in Winnipeg, he said, referring to campaign funds, that he had had the greatest difficulty to get anyone to give him enough money to prepare the record of the administration. I do not wonder at that, because the less his friends know about his administration the better. That is the very thing he wants us to forget.

"I presume in this gathering there must be at least a few who are supporters of Mr. Meighen and the candidate who is running in his interests here."

Mr. King was interrupted by a wave of applause. He continued:

Who Gave Mandate?

"I want to ask them this question. Have you or has anyone that you know directly or indirectly been responsible for giving to Mr. Meighen the right to carry on the Government of this country during the last 16 months?"

Cries of No, No!

Mr. King: "Is there anyone that will say yes?"

There being no reply, Mr. King continued:

"I must ask what sort of citizens you are? Are you going to support a man who refuses the public the right of government, the most fundamental of all the rights of a free people? Are you going to return a Prime Minister to power for another five years who has deprived the people of that fundamental right of carrying on the Government of the country? I say Mr. Meighen is condemned by his own friends in this very audience.

Rights of People Usurped

"It is bad enough that Mr. Meighen during 16 months should have spent millions upon millions of the money of the people but when you remember the fact that he has committed this country to vast obligations from which it will be difficult to free ourselves it becomes more serious the extent to which the rights of the people have been usurped.

"Most serious of all, not only has he spent the money of the people and incurred obligations of the most serious kind but in regard to our whole future legislation he has helped to put a blot on the pages of legislation. Remember this: Every law in this country has to go through two houses, the Commons and the Senate. You have only to look at the newspapers of the last few months to see that he has been filling the Senate with appointees of his own men, with men of mentality akin to his own, indifferent to the desire or wish of the people.

"These men will have their say as to whether or not any particular measure is likely to be enacted into

law in the course of the next few years.

Should Unite.

"If we are wise, those of us who are interested in Liberal and Progressive legislation, instead of dividing our forces at the present time in a manner that will help to give Mr. Meighen supporters in the House of Commons we will unite our forces and march forth to battle with the second chamber, one of the great struggles ahead of our people. No wonder Mr. Meighen wants the people to forget his record and that of his administration and seek to make an issue out of protection or free trade.

"Let me come to my point. Not only has Mr. Meighen in the administration of the affairs of the country been indifferent to the rights of the people but he has been indifferent to the rights of the representatives of the people in Parliament. I want to refer to one question particularly which will be of interest to you in Regina, the railway rates. When the government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier went out of power we had in the control of this country some 2,200 miles of railway.

D 5775

3

Mr. King
headed
Nov. 17/21