

my right hon. friend presume to say that the electorate of Canada, taken collectively, are not to be accorded the same right.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Will the hon. gentleman be good enough to tell me when the elections took place in Saskatchewan and Alberta?

Mr. KING: I stated, but the Prime Minister apparently did not hear me, that all the provinces had held their elections shortly after the Armistice, with the exception of Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I did not hear the hon. gentleman state the exception.

Mr. KING: The elections in Alberta and Saskatchewan, I believe, were held in July 1917.

Mr. MEIGHEN: This House was elected in December, 1917.

Mr. KING: Yes, but I am speaking now of the period subsequent to the signing of the Armistice. It was a short time before the signing of the Armistice when these particular provinces had their elections. Does my right hon friend think that the people of the different provinces are so inferior that they are not to be entitled to a general election? The Government of which he is the head is denying to the people of Canada rights which every Government that has a real appreciation of its duty to the people, has long since conceded. May I say to my right hon. friend that I think he will find that the only Governments which have not allowed their people a general election are those of Canada and Russia.

My right hon. friend, in his public addresses, has had a good deal to say about Bolshevism. He seems to regard all those who are not of his way of thinking as Bolshevik. Let me ask him what is Bolshevism other than the usurpation of government by a group, through some act of violence which defies the laws, usages, and customs which constitutional procedure has devised to preserve representative institutions. So long as the consequences, in robbing the people of their rights, are the same, it matters but little what the method employed may be. The only fundamental difference between the usurpation of the powers of popular government in Russia and its usurpation by the present administration in Canada, is that in Russia physical violence has been the instrument used by the usurpers to effect their purpose, while in Canada it has been legislative violence.

When a comparison of this kind is even remotely possible, it is evidence, Mr.

Speaker, of the lengths we have drifted away from the spirit of our constitution, from the responsible self-government which is the very foundation of our political freedom.

It was not alone our Parliament buildings which suffered partial destruction during the period of the war; our parliamentary institutions suffered destruction in large measure along with the rest. Customs usages and practices, intended to preserve the free, representative, self-governing character of our Parliament and the responsible character of its ministry, were one by one temporarily set aside, one by one ignored, until to-day we are witnessing open defiance of the most fundamental of all principles of free government, namely: the right of the people to control their own Parliament.

What matters it if we preserve the form and letter of the law and of the constitution if the spirit is lacking? "for the letter killeth but the Spirit giveth life".

We have reconstructed our Parliament Buildings and made of them a glorious edifice, of which as a nation we are justly proud. But unless we can restore the spirit of our forefathers, which made the constitution what it is; unless we can make of these halls of parliament a citadel of a people's liberties, we will have erected over the sacrifices of the war only a whited sepulchre, a thing in form and appearance outwardly beautiful, but within a charnel house of disillusionment full of intrigues and deceptions, full of broken pledges, of shattered ideals, of lost visions, of vanished faiths, and containing the seeds of a nation's decay.

What is it, Mr. Speaker, that works havoc in human lives, that destroys the noblest of friendships, that blights all that is most sacred in our human relations? It is the loss of confidence that comes through disillusionment, through the broken pledges, the shattered ideals, the lost visions, the vanished faiths. Cruel, indeed, it is when that breach in confidence comes between man and man, between friend and friend, between race and race, between nation and nation; but when it comes between a people and its Government, there is no saying what injury it may ultimately work.

What we need to-day is to seek to restore to the people faith in our parliamentary institutions, through conceding their right of control over the Parliament of the country. We know that there are rights under the law; that there are powers under

the constitution; these we are prepared to concede to the limit. But is there no such thing in our national economy as public morality? Is there nothing binding in conscience and in honour between those who rule a people and those who have permitted them to rule?

The people know, they do not have to be informed upon the grounds of the support given by them to Union Government in 1917. It was demanded of them in words of patriotism; it was engraven upon their hearts in terms of human sacrifice. Confidence in the patriotic motives of the members of the Government was the essence of their support. That confidence has gone. The people thought they were returning patriots to power. They find in office to-day only office seekers, and office holders, those who love the loaves and the

fishes, who make broad their phylacteries, who enlarge the border of their garments, who love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, who make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within are full of extortion and excess.

Confidence in government, Mr. Speaker, will never be restored till the people regain the control over Parliament and the executive which they have lost. For that reason, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by my hon. friend the member for Shelburne and Queens (Mr. Fielding) that the following be added to the Address:

We respectfully submit to Your Excellency that Your Excellency's present advisers do not possess the confidence of this House or of the country, and that their retention of office constitutes a usurpation of the powers of popular government.