

the pictures that appeared in the newspaper press and on the bill boards, during the campaign.

We contended in the last Parliament that the House of Commons was not a representative House, that the Government was an irresponsible and not a responsible one, that my right hon. friend was an unelected and not an elected Prime Minister, and it was with that appeal we addressed the people of this country. To-day we have a Parliament that is representative of the people, to-day we have a Government that in the truest and broadest sense, is responsible to Parliament as well as to the people and I think my right hon. friend may cease to be alarmed as to how the affairs of this country will be carried on during the next few years under these new auspices.

To come now, Mr. Speaker, to some of the concrete matters touched on by my right hon. friend, may I speak first of the question of the return to the western provinces of their natural resources? My right hon. friend said that for ten years past an offer had been made to the western provinces along the lines of the proposal that has recently been made by the present Government. He pointed out a little later, however, that the offer which had been made by the present Administration was not confined to one method of solution only but that an alternative method was also suggested. My right hon. friend spoke about an offer of an arbitration, and seemed to think we on this side should endeavour to settle that question by appointing arbitrators from the different provinces of the Dominion. No one knows better than my right hon. friend himself, that that is the very course that the western provinces have objected to so strongly in the past. There was nothing in my communication to the Premiers of the provinces of Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan which spoke of arbitration. I made a reference to an accounting in matters of financial obligation between these provinces and the Federal Government, but that is a very different thing to an arbitration of a character likely to cause embarrassment and that will bring no fruitful results. May I read from the letter which I sent to the Premiers of the different provinces. The apposite paragraph is as follows:

If however, the Government of the Prairie Provinces would not be satisfied with such an arrangement,—

That is the one similar to the offer which had previously been made—

—but would prefer an accounting between the Dominion and the Provinces from the beginning, by an independent tribunal, we would not object to such a plan. In any agreement that might be come to along these lines it would be, of course, necessary that adequate provision be made for crediting the provinces with all moneys received by the Dominion and charging to the Provinces all outlay by the Dominion, directly or indirectly, in relation to the management of the resources. Any award duly made by the tribunal should be binding on both sides. Any sums found to be due by the Dominion to a Province or by a Province to the Dominion might be capitalized and interest adjusted in connection with the annual Provincial subsidy.

Another point to which I would like to draw attention is this: The concluding paragraph of the letter from which I have just read is in the following words:

I need hardly add that of course any arrangement that might be made would be subject to the approval of the Dominion Parliament.

My right hon. friend tried to convey the impression that in some way the Government was prepared to hand over their natural resources to the western provinces and under the arrangement deny to the other provinces of the Dominion any rights that they might have. Nothing can be clearer than what I have just read to show that the proposal the Government has made is one which carries with it the right of every province of this Dominion to have any claims it may have against the western provinces taken into due consideration in any accounting that will be made in the settlement of these natural resources claims.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Perhaps I misunderstood the letter. Does my hon. friend mean that when this commission makes its award, on the basis of accounting as he states, that award shall be submitted to Parliament afterwards for its approval?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: It need not necessarily be a commission. We have offered the western provinces to meet with their representatives. As a Government we are prepared to discuss with them the return of their natural resources. It may be necessary to go into a strict accounting of all the moneys due by the provinces to the Dominion, or by the Dominion to the provinces. Whether or not it will be necessary to do more than employ expert accountants for that purpose will depend largely on the attitude which the western provinces take. Whatever course may be necessary—and that is a matter for negotiation—to arrive at a final conclusion as to what is just and fair, it must carry