

resolution to which he gives such vociferous adherence. He says that I cast aspersions upon the intention of the government, and in the next breath he admits that I cast none whatever; that I admitted in the first place that the minister himself had no desire to use this machinery for political purposes. What I contended was that the machinery was such that it could readily be used for such a purpose, and I stated that this parliament has no right to pass legislation which is open to any such use. Did the minister argue on that question? He never touched it. It is something he cannot appreciate. His mind is far removed from anything in the way of a machine in politics—a machine found in another stratum of existence far from that in which he has lived all his life—so much so that he cannot come to a discussion of its existence from one side or the other.

Mr. LAPOINTE: Keep cool, brother.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Did the Minister of Justice say that he boasted of his machine?

Mr. LAPOINTE: No.

Mr. MEIGHEN: A friendly press gives him credit for having done so, and in doing so he would speak words of sincerity with much more appeal to me than his words of this afternoon.

Mr. CANNON: It seemed to work well yesterday.

Mr. MEIGHEN: What did?

Mr. CANNON: Our machine.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I place the Solicitor General alongside of the Minister of Railways and I ask this House: Would you put either of them above the use of a machine? Would you like to entrust this conglomeration of quickly adjustable election machinery to the operation of either the Solicitor General or the Minister of Railways?

Mr. CANNON: I never use a telegram in cipher during any election.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Nor did I; nor did I ever suggest it against another when I had no evidence in support of the suggestion. I throw back at the Solicitor General the insinuation, and I say that whenever he comes before this House and makes the exhibition of himself that his colleague did when he brought that telegram into this chamber and failed entirely in support of it, I shall be sorry for him and think it is about time for him to

extricate himself from public life. But from one point of view the collapse of the former minister at that time was even more creditable than the insinuation of his successor to-day.

The minister says: If the board was honest enough to operate a purchase of lands, why cannot it be honest enough to operate a reduction in price?

Mr. DUNNING: To negotiate it.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Very good. I laboured to make that point clear, but I did not get it into the head of the minister. I will try again. The original act did not lend itself to political manipulation at all; there was no possibility under it of using the soldier as a political agent or of bringing coercion upon him. The act was not such that it could be used in that way, no matter how the minister might have desired to do so.

Mr. DUNNING: My right hon. friend's statement does not make it so. It is merely a statement.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I propose now to show why it was so, but it would have been rather appropriate for the minister to show that it could have been so before he used the language he did in his address. The minister, through his board going out to buy land for the soldier, could bring no pressure to bear upon that soldier whatever. The act did not give him the power to do so, and I demand of the minister to read me the clause of the act which gave him such a power. He could not offer the soldier any reward, nor could he hold out any penalty.

Mr. YOUNG (Weyburn): What about the man who was selling the land?

Mr. MEIGHEN: He could not do the same either. The soldier himself had to be satisfied with that land and with its price, and so had the board of appraisers. There was no way therefore in which the machinery could have been used as election or political machinery in any sense. The parliament of the day was not asked to depend upon its opinion of the sincerity and public spirit of the minister, whatever its opinion might have been, before it could endorse that legislation. This parliament is now asked by the Minister of Railways—and the demand is made in imperious tones—to do that very thing in relation to this bill. Under this legislation the minister can go out and scatter favours with a largesse to his heart's content, and with no restraint whatever, among 17,000 men.

Mr. DUNNING: Rot.