

Unemployment Continuance Act

take away the constitutional basis, as Redlich says, nothing further remains that is worthy of consideration.

Redlich goes on to say.

Irreconcilable parties, which oppose an existing union of states or stand for a subordination of state to church, parties which reject the whole framework of society, or which draw their life from a principle only less deep and powerful than that of religion, the principle of nationality, are all in mortal conflict—latent if not apparent, possibly unconscious for long periods—with the conventions of parliament; they are, therefore, knowingly or unknowingly attacking parliamentary government itself, at all events in the form known to the constitution.

Let me read the pertinent words:

Irreconcilable parties—are all in mortal conflict—with the conventions of parliament; they are, therefore, knowingly or unknowingly, attacking parliamentary government itself, at all events in the form known to the constitution.

The reference was to the Irish party taking the position that Ireland would not be a part of the government of Great Britain and Ireland. That was an irreconcilable position: you could not have a party taking that position and at the same time have government carried on under parliamentary authority. It was in conflict with the basis of government; and, knowingly or unknowingly, the party that took that position was attacking parliamentary government itself, at all events in the form known to the constitution. Now, what is another irreconcilable position?

Mr. STEVENS: Why does not the right hon. gentleman read on? He is purporting to quote extracts from the leader of the government's speech. Why does he not read the next clause? Why does he stop right there?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I stopped at the end of the paragraph.

Mr. STEVENS: My right hon. friend did not; he stopped in the middle.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Will my hon. friend please allow me to finish this part?

Mr. STEVENS: The right hon. gentleman gives partial quotations and builds up an argument which is a distortion of the position taken by the Prime Minister.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Mr. Speaker, I appeal to you to keep order in this house so far as the ministry is concerned. I am reading a quotation from Redlich which the Prime Minister gave the other day. I am explaining it, and am fully fifteen minutes away from the point on which the Minister of

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

Trade and Commerce (Mr. Stevens) was interrupting me. If he wishes to make an interruption of the kind, he can do so when the subject is concluded; he need not break in at a point which he sees is beginning to tell against the ministry.

Let me indicate another irreconcilable position. A position which in British politics has been irreconcilable with constitutional government for three hundred years, and we might as well recognize that fact at once. A party that takes the position that parliament must be supreme over the executive is taking one stand, a stand which I submit is the only one that can be taken in accordance with the constitution and with parliamentary government. A party that takes the position that the executive must be supreme over parliament is taking a position which is irreconcilable with everything that relates to constitutional government. And that is the position which hon. gentlemen opposite are taking.

Mr. STEVENS: No.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I do not care in what form it presents itself, whether it relates to unemployment relief or to any other question, what hon. gentlemen opposite are asserting in this measure, the third reading of which we are asked to pass, is that we shall agree to the doctrine that the ministry is supreme over parliament; that parliament shall part with its rights of control in matters of taxation and public expenditure; that parliament shall part with its right to legislate upon peace, order and good government, and leave these things to the executive itself to do with in secret cabinet council as it pleases. This position is irreconcilable with anything in the nature of constitutional government, and a party that takes a position which is irreconcilable with the constitution is destroying the very foundations of constitutional government.

Let us see now what Redlich says with respect to obstruction. It is to be found in the next sentence:

Obstruction is, in reality, nothing less than a repudiation of the existing constitution of the country—

Mr. STEVENS: Hear, hear.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING:
—intensified to the point of denying the right of its parliament to exist—

Mr. STEVENS: Exactly what you are doing.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING:
—and expressed in a conscious misuse of the forms and principles of procedure essential to the efficiency of parliamentary action.