

*Unemployment Continuance Act*

Then follows the enumeration with which all hon. members are familiar. Is there any word anywhere in the British North America Act which says it is lawful for the executive as distinguished from parliament to legislate with respect to peace, order and good government? Is there one clause in the constitution of our country which gives to any Prime Minister and his colleagues the right to do that which is assigned only to the parliament of Canada as a whole? We cannot afford to allow any ministry to take from parliament that which is given to it by the constitution of this country as its exclusive right and obligation. The right to legislate respecting peace, order and good government is a right assigned not to the ministry but to parliament itself. As we have said repeatedly, why have a parliament at all if the ministry is to be allowed to exercise this power? Peace, order and good government include virtually everything. The ministry have so recognized this fact because under it they have amended the Bank Act and the Insurance Act, have dealt with the finances of this country, have increased the mounted police force and performed various other acts coming within the subjects enumerated as those belonging to parliament.

With the unlimited money they will receive under this bill, with the power they will have under peace, order and good government to legislate on anything they wish, they could if they so desired create a standing army to overawe this parliament, and, do so in virtue of the powers which this house is being asked to give to them by this bill at the present time. That no doubt is the kind of thing the Prime Minister would like to bring about: to establish himself as a dictator, as a second Cromwell in his day, but I say that, before we return to the days of the revolution, we shall do our utmost to prevent a reversion to any condition such as that.

Let me ask my hon. friend—I will refer particularly to the Secretary of State (Mr. Cahan) because I think he has some conscience in these things—how would he feel if a socialist government were in office at the present time and, under the rights claimed by the ministry of which he is a member, attempted to legislate with respect to peace, order and good government, and to deal with the very subjects with which he and his colleagues have dealt? How would he feel if they passed an order in council to amend the Bank Act without any reference to parliament? How would he feel if they said that, by virtue of a situation which had arisen, the banks of the

country should not longer be permitted to carry on their business under the provisions of the act which parliament had enacted; that it was necessary to amend that act, and then proceeded, by order in council, to amend the Bank Act? That is what has been done under provisions of the enactment similar to this measure.

Let us consider the question of insurance companies. How would my hon. friend view the action of a socialist ministry which said: We do not care what the law is with respect to insurance companies, we are going to pass by order in council the legislation which we think is necessary in this time of crisis to make these insurance companies do whatever we believe to be in the interests of the country.

Mr. CAHAN: I assume my answer may be reserved until the right hon. gentleman concludes?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I should imagine that my hon. friend would want to reserve it for a long time.

That is the position in which we are at the present time. May I go a step further? Under orders in council which have been passed by virtue of this authority to legislate on peace, order and good government, the government has dealt with the question of the currency, the gold of this country. How would my Conservative friends feel if a socialist government in office, using the precedent of the action taken by the present ministry under authority to legislate on peace, order and good government, started forthwith to have the printing presses of this country manufacture whatever money they wished and to distribute that money broadcast, giving as a reason that this was necessary in order to meet a situation which existed?

Mr. BELL (Hamilton): Don't worry; there will not be any socialist government.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I hear an hon. member opposite say that there will be no socialist government. May I say to him that this is the kind of thing that breeds socialist governments of the most extreme type. This is the sort of thing that would provide any government with the weapons it might need in order, if it so desired, to deal in a subversive manner with the constitution and other rights of the people.

Mr. HEAPS: Does the right hon. gentleman mean to infer that if a socialist government came into power these would be the only means it would use to achieve its objective?