

PRESS CLIPPINGS

D21262

Office of
The Leader of the Opposition

Name of Publication.....

Date.....

Subject.....

Empire Agreements.

The Empire trade agreements were another instrument for flouting the will of Parliament, said Mr. King. Under the agreements in many instances the intermediate tariff had been raised to the level of the general. This had made it more difficult to negotiate trade agreements with other countries should a new government try to negotiate.

Further, the agreements required a fixed margin of preference for British countries should always be maintained. This meant that Parliament could not lower the tariff beyond that margin while the agreements remained in force. The tariff was pegged at a certain point. The tariff was a tax and surely the most sacred right of Parliament was the power to lower taxes. Yet that right had been taken away.

Trade Treaty With U.S.

For the last two or three years, the time seemed ripe to negotiate a trade treaty with Washington, Mr. King said. Every time the subject was brought up in Parliament, Mr. Bennett said discussion would retard progress.

"I hope something of that kind (a treaty) will be brought about," Mr. King said. "But if it does, the people of Canada should ask why it was not done one, two or three years ago as it should have been. If it does not, the fault will be with Mr. Bennett for taking away from Parliament its authority over reciprocal trade treaties."

Centralized Authority.

It was the practice of Mussolini and Hitler to centralize authority in themselves just as Mr. Bennett had surrounded himself with power, Mr. King said. Even when the Conservative leader committed his party to a new reform policy, he did it on his own authority without consulting his followers or cabinet colleagues.

Hanging On.

Mr. Bennett was hanging on to office to the last minute, Mr. King said. "Let me say to those who say the constitution is impeding progress: Do you realize you would not have an election even this year without the constitution which says Parliament must be dissolved within the next eleven days?"

Marketing Act.

Turning to the Marketing Act, Mr. King said it also took away political and individual freedom. The Liberal party did not object to state assistance in marketing, it realized it was necessary. But it objected to the creation of a great bureaucracy "made up of Tory appointees" and the usurpation of personal liberties under the guise of extending marketing facilities. Crimes and imprisonments could be established under the act, not by Parliament or even the cabinet, but by boards responsible to no one. The boards were not elective representatives but self-interested persons.

The Marketing Act applied not only to producers but manufacturers of national products as well, Mr. King said. This permitted manufacturers to set up monopolies "and they are doing it today. Where will we be five years from now under that sort of legislation?"

Under the Marketing Act Mr. Bennett had taken control of the whole trade of Canada to the governor-in-council which meant Mr. Bennett himself, said the Liberal leader. The government had power to regulate, restrict or prohibit the export or import of any natural product. This gave it complete control of external and internal trade.

"Could you give a dictator more power?" he asked. "He has the blank checks, he has all the money in the treasury at his command. He has control of external and internal trade. And all these were done just as they were in dictatorships in the older countries in the name of emergent conditions."

Compulsory Features.

Continuing his attack on the compulsory clauses of the Marketing Act, Mr. King said the government could require all persons wishing to export or import a regulated product to require a license, not from Parliament but from some person designated by the government. "Is that freedom?" asked Mr. King.

The act further provided that anyone who failed to obey any order of the Dominion Marketing Board or of a local board was guilty of an offence and liable to fine and imprisonment. This was not punishment for an offence against an act of Parliament but for an offence against the order of some bureaucrat of which Parliament knew nothing.