

FOUR FEDERAL BY-ELECTIONS

Four constituencies are now unrepresented in the House of Commons. Stanstead has been so for over five months, Selkirk and Humboldt for some time, Cartier for only a few days. Mr. King has professed his readiness to bring on the election in Selkirk at once, if Mr. Bracken will run there. Beyond that he does not commit himself. Yet in 1920 Mr. King said that by-elections should in every case be brought on as soon as possible after a vacancy....occurs" (Hansard, pp. 29-30); and in 1921 he moved that "writs should be issued at once to fill the existing vacancies.....and polls should be held at the earliest possible time so as to ensure representation of all constituencies during the present session of Parliament." Failure to do so would mean "taxation without representation". He accused the Government of being "alert and ready" to bring on by-elections as fast as possible where its own "political ends" would be served, but not otherwise. He declared the by-elections were particularly necessary because of the unprecedentedly "vast problems" confronting the country, and the "colossal sums of money....almost \$600,000,000" which the Government was asking for. (Hansard, pp. 1293-1294, 1299.)

All four of the by-elections now pending can be brought on forthwith. Mr. King's offer in Selkirk proves it. They would be, as Mr. King said in 1930, "a means of keeping the Administration in touch with the country and of giving it the views of the people on great public issues" (Hansard, pp. 29-30). But after Winnipeg North Centre, the last thing Mr. King wants is any further expression of "the views of the people on great public issues". All four seats concerned are notoriously unsafe for the Liberal party, seats where the "political, partisan ends of the Government" would be served by putting off the election as long as possible. Mr. King's spacious gesture to Mr. Bracken underlines this point. The last thing in the world Mr. King wants is to be obliged to put up a candidate in Selkirk and suffer another smashing defeat like Winnipeg North Centre. He naturally prefers to stand chivalrously aside and let Mr. Bracken take the smashing instead. But if Mr. Bracken will not run, Mr. King reserves his right to delay this election, and the others, as long as he pleases, within the six months allowed by Statute; so that all four of the seats now unrepresented may well remain unrepresented throughout most of the coming session. In 1920 and 1921 this was an outrage upon the Constitution. But circumstances alter cases.

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U.S. CO-OPS DURING 1941

There were in 1941 nearly 4,500 co-ops in the United States, with an estimated paid-up membership of over 1,427,000, in addition to nearly 146,000 partly paid members. Retail business amounted to over \$345,000,000 and service business to nearly \$11,000,000. In addition the 54 distributive and service federations had a total business aggregating almost \$105,000,000. For identical associations reporting for both 1940 and 1941, the latter year showed increases in membership of the local associations of over 7 per cent and in sales of about 23 per cent. For the regional wholesales the increases were 9 and 23 per cent respectively.

The foregoing does not include telephone, electricity, insurance associations and credit unions. Their inclusion would bring the total number of associations in the U.S.A. at the end of 1941 to nearly 23,000, membership to almost 16,500,000 persons, total business to about a billion dollars in addition to wholesale business of nearly \$105,000,000. (November, 1942; issue of the Monthly Labor Review, organ of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.)

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