

the Prime Minister professes, let his professions be judged by his actions.

Speaking in Montreal a short time ago the Prime Minister revealed what he has in mind in proposing social legislation. He gave away his hand pretty clearly. I have already stated that I believe it is an election scheme, and I hold that belief very strongly. I did not think however that the Prime Minister would be prepared to go quite so far towards seeking to make it an issue fraught with all kinds of possible dangers to the unity of this country. It was quite apparent however, he had something of the kind in his mind when only a few evenings ago he spoke in the city of Montreal. That was his last address; I believe it was on January 15, only two days before the opening of the session. I heard him saying—and I have no doubt many other people heard him—“Do you want minimum wages and maximum hours of work? If you do not, then vote for Taschereau and King.” Then he went on to say, “Do you want your old people not cared for? Well, if you do not, then vote for Taschereau and King.” These were the terms used by the Prime Minister in addressing the people of Montreal.

First of all, remember that these statements were made over the radio. They were not made in parliament where there is opportunity to reply. The Prime Minister referred to Mr. Taschereau. He, by the way, is not a member of this chamber and cannot appear on its floor to speak for himself.

An hon. MEMBER: Over the radio.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Over the radio? My hon. friends talk about radio. Well, they may have a fathomless chest into which to dip for radio purposes, but other people have not.

May I proceed to follow up the Prime Minister's statements. I have not the slightest doubt about Mr. Taschereau being able to take care of himself; he will in his own way and at his own time; to-night I do not purpose to speak either for or against Mr. Taschereau. I am not dealing with absent personages; I am concerned only with those in front of me. I shall confine my remarks to the Prime Minister's attack upon myself.

What else did the Prime Minister say? “When they had a chance did they do anything about these things?” “When they had a chance”—in other words when Mr. King had a chance did he do anything about minimum wages, maximum hours, old age pensions and other social problems? I suppose we will hear the Prime Minister and some of his followers answer, “Yes, he wrote

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

a book, and he put his principles and ideas in that book.” I purpose this evening, even if it takes me a little longer than I had intended, to show that before the book was written many of the principles and ideas therein set forth found expression in legislation. I shall show that after its publication many more of the principles and ideas therein set forth found expression in legislation and I shall support my statements not by my own assertions merely but from the ranks of hon. gentlemen opposite. There are some fortunately amongst us who have a sense of chivalry and decency in public life and who do not make statements about others when they are not present to answer or to refute what is said about them. There are some who like to see fair play in public life. I admit we have very little of that practice at times, but I believe it is well to encourage it when we can.

Even before the Prime Minister had made these statements in Montreal and before his remarks had been broadcast over the radio network he had been accusing the Liberal party, and particularly myself of having done nothing on behalf of labour. I hold in my hand a copy of an editorial which appeared in the Montreal Gazette.

Mr. BENNETT: Hear, hear.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I am pleased to see in his seat tonight, although I am sorry to see him sitting on the government side, a former distinguished editor of the Montreal Gazette.

Mr. WHITE (Mount Royal): And who retired from the editorial chair nine years ago.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: That is why I used the expression “a former editor”; I was not referring to the present editor. I was seeking to make it quite clear that the Montreal Gazette is not an organ of the Liberal party but is one which throughout this country has been regarded as the stalwart of the stalwarts among Conservative organs. At any rate it is perfectly clear that when the editorial to which I am referring was written the Montreal Gazette was not holding any brief for me, because the paragraph I am about to read began with those very words. It is as follows:

We hold no brief for Mr. Mackenzie King, but when the Prime Minister refers to Liberal history and speaks of child labour, sweatshops, slave wages and so on as being among the faults and injustices of the capitalistic system it is impossible to disregard the appeal for fair play which has been made. It is a matter of record that Mr. King personally has always interested himself very keenly and practically in these evils and that it was in fact his crusade against them that brought him into public life,