

REV. G. R. WELCH:

Ladies and Gentlemen: We are pleased to find the audience tonight includes so many ladies. If the ladies are to have the franchise in the near future they do all to become interested in public life. Possibly if they had the vote this meeting would not have been necessary. This large and representative gathering manifests great interest in the matter of the "Crisis in B. C." pamphlet. The Ministerial Union of the Lower Mainland has been adversely criticized for issuing this pamphlet. But we make no apology for assuming the moral leadership in this crisis. The ministers are the one great unpartisan body best fitted to take up without prejudice such questions as have arisen in this province and that affect its moral welfare. It is because of this moral aspect of the question that the ministers are behind it. If we do not take the lead, who will? Our motives cannot be called into question. We have no axe to grind. We have nothing to gain by our action. None of us are looking for the plums of office. We are not in pocket but out of pocket, by this movement. Some of those who have been disconcerted by the exposures of "The Crisis" pamphlet have said to the ministers: "Go on with your knitting and let us alone." That is the same cry that was raised by the unclean spirit when the World's Greatest Reformer was exorcising him from the devil-cursed man. "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee?" And the same cry has been echoed by those who have been doing the bad work ever since. But the ministers don't propose to stop until the unclean spirit is exorcised from the body politic. If anyone thinks that only a few of the ministers are in sympathy with the action of the Union such a one has only to look at the large number of members on the platform to be convinced to the contrary. Many others would be present did not other duties prevent.

The Ministerial Union of the Lower Mainland has asked three gentlemen to represent it tonight. I now call on the first of these to address you—the Rev. Dr. John Mackay, principal of Westminster Hall.

REV. DR. MACKAY:

Ladies and gentlemen: At such a time as this when the whole Empire is engaged in a life-and-death struggle and all our hearts are heavy with anxiety for those who have gone to the front or sorrow for those who will never return, it is not a pleasant task to have to take part in a matter which from its very nature is more

or less contentious. But I am convinced that we at home have a duty quite as sacred as theirs who have gone to the front, to see to it that the land in which we live shall be worthy in life and institutions of the terrible price that is being paid for it. (Hear, hear!) Personally I would much prefer to remain silent tonight, but since I have been urged by my brethren to speak for them, I should feel myself a coward to let Mr. Cooke and the other five men who signed "The Crisis" bear the brunt of the criticism which it has brought out. (Applause.)

It is not enough to try to show that Mr. Cooke is a Liberal. Whatever he is, he and his five companions were chosen to represent the whole Union and the Union is ready and willing to shoulder the full responsibility for their words and acts in this matter. So, too, Mr. Cooke, Mr. Stillman and myself appear before you tonight as the duly accredited representatives of about sixty of the ministers of the Lower Mainland and what we say is said on their behalf, not as a personal matter in any sense of the term.

Since "The Crisis" appeared persistent attempts have been made from various directions to show that it was imposed by some sleight of hand on the part of Mr. Cotsworth upon the simple and guileless Ministerial Union and second that there is no such thing as the Ministerial Union, or at best it is a conspiracy of a few men. (Laughter.)

This is not a question of party politics. It is a question of the very life of the province. We have reached a crisis where the best men are needed and no Conservative or Liberal, should be elected, if an election must come first, who will not pledge himself to the fullest and fairest investigation and whose past record has not shown him capable and strong and, above all, unshakably honest.

The government organ in this city said after the Orpheum meeting, "Mr. Bowser's statement is commended to the attention of all who have read 'The Crisis' pamphlet and are anxious to know the truth of the matter and especially to the members of the Ministerial Union in whose name but without whose knowledge and approval the pamphlet was issued." (Laughter.) Again referring to a meeting of the Union it makes the extraordinary suggestion, "We wish to send a representative to