

the Constitution, and by depriving you of the right to choose whom you wished to manage your affairs in time of war. Had members of the House of Commons joined in extending the life of Parliament, without authority from the Constitution or from you, they would have completely usurped all your rights and powers.

Abraham Lincoln faced with a similar situation.

Abraham Lincoln, at the time of the great civil war, was faced with the problem of an election in war time in circumstances even more difficult. The Constitution of the United States for a presidential election every four years. The Civil War began in April, 1861. The presidential elections were due in November, 1864. Lincoln had to decide whether he and his colleagues would override the Constitution and extend their own term on the pretext that the Constitution was not framed to cope with civil war. Lincoln maintained that failure to hold the elections would be an admission that the rebellion had succeeded, and that America's free institutions had already been destroyed in a war for freedom. "We cannot", he said, "have free government without elections." The elections were held. Lincoln and his government were returned, and the world was shown that, even in the midst of a civil war, democracy and freedom could be maintained.

Chapters in the history of democracy.

I venture to say that when Tuesday next is past, it will be the proud boast of the people of this country, if not indeed of the whole British Empire, that Canada has added another chapter to the history of democracy in the new world. For our country will have shown, that under British parliament institutions, it is also possible for a free people, at a time of war, to preserve their electoral freedom and the fundamental liberties which it secures.

The case for and against National Government.

Let me now say a few words about the proposal for national government as it has been discussed in the present elections. What Dr. Manion means, when he speaks of

national government, is a coalition, or union government—a government composed of members of different political parties who combine their forces to achieve a given end. There may be times when this form of government may be desirable. In some circumstances, it may even be a necessity. Such a situation may arise when a government and an opposition are so evenly balanced that party government is well-nigh impossible. This was the situation after the union of Upper and Lower Canada before Confederation. No party could secure a clear majority, and, without a coalition, government itself could not be carried on. This was the situation which led George Brown and others to join with Sir John A. Macdonald to form a coalition government.

Circumstances have also arisen in which men of opposing parties regard a specific policy as essential to the welfare of the country, and see no way of securing its adoption except by combining their forces in a union government. This was the case in 1917, when the union government of Sir Robert Borden was formed to put through conscription. Neither of these situations presents itself in Canada today, and neither seems likely to arise.

Motive underlying Dr. Manion's advocacy of National Government.

All that Dr. Manion is trying to do is to elect a party government by the device of calling it a national government.

There is a right way and a wrong way to go about every thing. If Dr. Manion, and those who are supporting his idea of national government, ever had any real desire to form such a government, they would not have expended so much of their efforts on antagonizing and villifying the very men with whom they would have to co-operate in the affairs of government. Instead, they would have done their utmost to conciliate them, and to remove any feelings of personal antipathy and antagonism from those with whom they differed politically.