

The Address—Mr. Meighen

taken repeatedly, the hon. member read a telegram from his deputy minister stating that we had sent our soldiers—at least his words carried this intimation—not on requisition from the mayor or the civil authorities, but that we had sent them under power of order in council. And then he referred to an order in council passed on the 4th of April, 1918, passed with the support of his own finance minister of to-day, passed with the concurrence of the member for Halifax who on this night spoke with him on the same platform but who was in 1918, a member of the government,—an order in council to take care generally of riotous disturbances in the country; because this date in 1918 was many months before the close of the war. That order in council never was acted upon to the extent of sending in a single soldier in relation to the strike of 1919; and I repeat before the Minister of National Defence, who has everything under his own charge in his own office, that when he intimated to that audience that troops were sent from outside at the time referred to by the government or by anyone else, into that area, he intimated what was not true. Not a troop was sent there. The only troops that were used were citizen soldiers who enlisted and trained especially for the purpose of that particular crisis; and they were used only in demonstration, and at the request of the Mayor in order that all might see that the civil authorities, exercising civil instruments, would be supported if the need arose. By those means the whole situation was taken care of, and I venture to suggest to the House that it was done successfully, because the less display of force there is, the less transport of troops, so long as law and order are preserved the better always are the results. I say that matters were handled infinitely more successfully than they were under hon. gentlemen opposite on this occasion. What I protest against is the assertion of a minister right on the eve of the contest, that there had been a misleading of the audience in a statement that was true absolutely to the letter, and the quoting from his deputy minister of a telegram which had no relation to what had actually taken place in the Winnipeg area. I had not purposed referring to this incident but for the hon. member's repeated interruptions of my remarks.

There was another by-election, this time in Halifax—

Mr. MACDONALD (Pictou): There was one in Pictou, too.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes, there was one in Pictou, I know; but the hon. member may [Mr. Meighen.]

recall, that the Prime Minister stated in 1921 that there was no significance to be attached to the re-election of newly appointed Ministers. I did not contradict the assertion, even though it was made in order to nullify the significance of a majority of some 4,000 which we had obtained at the time in St. John and a majority of some 1,800 which we obtained in Colchester. And, as a matter of fact, indeed, very little significance does attach to the appeal of ministers, just appointed, to their constituents for re-election. Hon. members in every part of the House will agree with that. But in all the other cases where did the government come out? In Halifax where did they come out? A majority of 5,000 turned into a minority of some 1,900; a total majority for both candidates of some 12,000 turned into a large minority. Against what? Against the promise of an elevator, against the promise of the Dartmouth pier, against railways sidings hurried up, against the most blazing attempts at constituency bribery ever recorded, save only in the history of Kent. We had a vote last session for an elevator in Halifax. It was stated on this side of the House that probably a by-election was in sight. We were not far astray; the by-election came. Plans and specifications in due time were got out, and the receipt of the tenders was timed for the month of November, the election being timed for 5th December. The month of November came and so did the tenders. The newspapers of the district were plastered with paid advertisements of hon. gentlemen opposite, plastered with promises of a new elevator, modern in every respect, to cost \$1,200,000. Speakers representing the government called upon the electors to vote for the government candidate in order that the elevator might be secured. The senior member for Halifax—not the hon. gentleman just elected—himself put advertisements in the newspapers calling upon the electors to support the government candidate, and the appeal I have before me. One after another, the appeal was,—“We have voted \$1,200,000 for the elevator; you are going to have the elevator”; and the government candidate declared that he had the authority of the Prime Minister for this assertion. The Minister of National Defence speaking on the platform with the Prime Minister, supported the candidate put forward by the government. Here are some of the reasons which were put forward why the electorate should vote for the government candidate:

1. The differential rate of 20 cents a ton had been abolished.
2. The increase of 10 per cent. in British preference.