

want to single out any particular province. I know that the demands upon the Government are very great; that constituents press for this, that, and the other thing, and it is very hard to refuse; but really we must sacrifice something in this country in order to put it on a sound financial business basis, and we might as well make up our minds to do it. No doubt the Government is approached from every quarter for improvements in various directions.

I cannot help feeling that it would be a great thing for this country if we had a controller or an official holding some such position, in which he could exercise a great deal of influence, a gentleman of the type of the late Mr. Alexander Mackenzie, who was Prime Minister of Canada. Mr. Mackenzie put this matter better perhaps than any other man has done, in a letter to Mr. Thomas Hodgins, who was Liberal member for West Elgin in the Ontario Legislature from 1871 to 1879. This letter was published in the *Toronto Globe* some years ago. In that letter Mr. Mackenzie said:

"Friends (?) expect to be benefited by offices they are unfit for, by contracts they are not entitled to, by advances not earned. Enemies ally themselves with friends and push the friends to the front. Some attempt to storm the office. Some dig trenches at a distance, and approach in regular siege form. I feel like the besieged, lying on my arms night and day. I have offended at least twenty parliamentary friends by defence of the citadel. A weak minister here would ruin the party in a month, and the country very soon."

Those conditions do not apply in exactly that form to-day, but the idea and the sentiment need to be kept before this country. Many of the men who ask for money to be spent for certain projects in their own constituencies are perfectly honest men, and the only thing necessary in dealing with them is for the Government representatives to have the courage to say no.

If I might be allowed to refer to a personal experience, I felt, when I returned from England in 1919, after demobilization, that I would not have a friend in this country because of my frequent refusals to the numerous ambitions and desires of people. I learned what it was to be obliged to say no, to say it frequently, and to stick to it. But I did not find that it did me very much harm, particularly when one had right and justice on his side. What this Government needs is to have the courage to say no and stick to it; otherwise this country's credit will in a short time be in a condition that we will very much regret.

These are my views in regard to the tremendous amount of money that is being voted in the Estimates. I do not think we

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can afford such expenditures. I think we have overdone it, and that it will result in disaster. The phrase "pork barrel" is in some senses a little offensive in relation to the expenditure of public money. It was invented in the United States, and we have not used it much in Canada; yet are not those words as used in the United States applicable to some things we see in this country at present? The idea is that a little money should be voted in this place, and a little money in the other to counterbalance it, so that it will go all round and nobody will kick. We are not in a position to adopt such methods. I do not think that we can go on spending money just as if we had no railway problem, as if we had no war debt, and as if there were thousands of people coming into the country and settling on the land.

These conditions as I recite them ought to be considered and faced. The Government are the trustees of the people of this country, and it seems to me that they should understand their position. If a man in business conducted his affairs in such a way as to be unable to pay his debts, and was reckless and careless, he would become bankrupt and would be denounced by the public. On the other hand, a man who struggles earnestly to meet his obligations and pay his debts is considered an honourable man. I admit that it would be difficult to bankrupt this country, but we want a happy and contented people here, and we want to reduce the cost of living in Canada. Unless taxation and the cost of living are reduced, and excessive freight rates, which are about 100 per cent more than they were previous to the war, we cannot develop interprovincial trade. Very great complaints are being heard in this regard from the Maritime provinces and also from the West. I think the time has arrived when the situation as I have outlined it should be taken into consideration by the Government, and I wish simply to enter my protest against this great expenditure.

Hon. J. S. McLENNAN: I wish to associate myself with the ideas of the honourable gentleman who has just spoken, and to recall to the House that three or four years ago we had a Committee on the Machinery of Government. One of the things that Committee suggested to the Government of Canada was a method by which they might be relieved of what is undoubtedly always a difficult position—refusal of requests of their friends. The idea was to have a Board of Public Works to which could be submitted all propositions made for the expenditure of public money in applications from constituen-