

read takes up in reading about half the entire time of his speech; so that quite clearly that reason for not having read the letter in its entirety is hardly one which will appeal to any fair-minded member of the house.

The first part of the communication, I submit to anyone who reads it, was left out because it rather served the purpose of the Solicitor General to conclude, after having read the latter part of the communication, with these words:

A few weeks after that letter the then Minister of Justice introduced a bill to repeal section 98 because he and his leader wanted to pay the price for the support of the two Labour members.

Without knowing what was in the first paragraphs, it might be thought by one reading only the latter part of the letter that they justified this kind of comment. I wish to point out first of all that the Labour members presented at the time a communication not only to the leader of the government of the day, but also to the leader of the opposition; it was an identical communication and, as was pointed out by the Solicitor General himself, having regard to the constitution of the house at that moment, neither one of the historic political parties was altogether sure of its position, and the labour leaders were seeking to obtain from each of them a statement of attitude with respect to certain legislation.

Now I think the Solicitor General should have read in its entirety the letter which was sent in reply by myself, and he should also have read the whole of the letter which was sent in reply to these gentlemen by the then leader of the opposition. I propose first of all to read the whole of the letter which was sent by me, so that hon. members may see for themselves what is referred to in the first paragraphs which were omitted by the Solicitor General:

Ottawa, January 28, 1926.

J. S. Woodsworth, Esq., M.P.,
House of Commons,
Ottawa.

Dear Mr. Woodsworth:

Replying to the letter received from Mr. Heaps and yourself, dated January 7, in which you ask whether it is the intention of the government to introduce at this session legislation with regard to: (a) provision for the unemployed; and (b) old age pensions, I would refer you, respecting provision for the unemployed, to the answer given in the House of Commons to-day by the Hon. Ernest Lapointe on behalf of the government in reply to a question by yourself, and which indicated the government's intention of carrying out with respect to emergency relief the practice adopted in cooperation with provinces and municipalities in the years immediately following the war. In answer to a question from Mr. Neill, Mr.

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

Lapointe further intimated that it was the intention of the government to introduce at this session legislation with respect to old age pensions.

You will observe that the statement made by Mr. Lapointe was in accordance with the intimation—

I stop here to point out that the statement made by Mr. Lapointe had no reference to section 98 of the criminal code. It had reference to matters of old age pensions and unemployment relief. By omitting that part of my letter, the Solicitor General avoided making that particular point clear. I will repeat the words of the letter:

You will observe that the statement made by Mr. Lapointe was in accordance with the intimation which I gave to Mr. Heaps and yourself at the time of our interview, following the receipt of the communication herein referred to.

With respect to amendments to: (a) the Immigration Act; (b) the Naturalization Act; and (c) the Criminal Code, which were referred to at the time of our interview, I would say that having since taken up the proposed amendments with the ministers concerned, I feel I am in a position to assure you that legislation on these matters will also be introduced in the course of the present session.

Yours sincerely,

W. L. Mackenzie King.

You will observe, Mr. Speaker, with respect to these three matters, I pointed out that, before replying, I should wish to confer with my colleagues who were administering the particular departments to which these measures had reference, that I should be able to give an answer only after I had had an opportunity of consulting them. I mention that because it is rather significant in the light of the reply which the Right Hon. Mr. Meighen, who was leader of the opposition at the time, made to these same gentlemen. I would direct your attention to the fact that the same communication was apparently addressed to Mr. Meighen and myself. If the reply to that communication, indicating the respective attitudes of the parties they addressed, is to be regarded as a price that was paid for the political support of any group, that indictment should be directed as strongly against the then leader of the Conservative party as against the leader of the government which was in office. Mr. Meighen replied, on January 9, 1926, as follows:

Ottawa, January 9, 1926.

Dear Mr. Woodsworth:

Answering letter of yourself and Mr. Heaps of the 7th, if you will observe my remarks in the House of Commons in the first session of the last parliament you will find my views clearly expressed on the subject of relief for unemployment. The thing to do for the unemployed is to get them work, and I have been often very disappointed that I have never been