

The hon. gentleman went on to say that we provided machine guns. Not a single machine gun is owned by the mounted police. The hon. gentleman said that we had bombs provided for the mounted police. So there were. They were tear bombs to escape the possible charge, if there be a riot or insurrection or difficulties, that the most humane methods were not used for the purpose of quelling it. The constables of Canada, having met, recommended that in such cases tear bombs would be highly desirable, and we supplied our police with numbers of them. Those are the bombs we had. . . .

No tanks are owned by the mounted police of the government. The only armoured car was the one belonging to the Department of Finance which conveys securities from the express office to the parliament buildings.

Now, Mr. Chairman, we must assume that the hon. members who referred to these specific things believed that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police force was increased for the express purpose of dealing with meetings of the unemployed, but this statement by the Prime Minister should have been sufficient to correct any misapprehension on their part. Yet the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, speaking in the city of Winnipeg on Easter Sunday, is reported in the Manitoba Free Press of March 28, under this heading:

Woodsworth sees danger in "blank cheque" proposal.

Already, he said, under the blank cheque voted by parliament at the last session, the sum of \$250,000 was appropriated to increase the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and equip them with machine guns, tear bombs, and such riot quelling arms.

The report continues:

"It is a serious thing." Mr. Woodsworth repeated, "this province falling for the bait of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police."

He is referring to the federal government taking over the policing of the provinces.

It means that Ottawa has at command a highly centralized military police force scattered all over Canada. I never thought we would come to that. I am told the western provinces fell for the bait because of their financial condition.

The Winnipeg Tribune of the same date reports the hon. member in these words:

Alleging that the Bennett government had made improper use of the "blank cheque" powers accorded it a year ago, J. S. Woodsworth, M.P., for Winnipeg North Centre, speaking Sunday at the Agnes street labour hall, ascribed the blockade tactics of the opposition in the House of Commons to the fear of further improper use. . . . About \$250,000 had been used to increase the mounted police force in the alleged interest of public security. Machine guns, tear bombs and other riot-fighting equipment had been purchased simultaneously with the increase in the force.

Now, I submit that after the matter had been discussed in this house and a definite statement made upon it by the Prime Minister, to appear before a meeting of the unemployed in a centre like Winnipeg, where there are many unemployed, and naturally there is much discontent, and again to recite in substance what he had stated in this house, although partially correct, was incorrect in that it did not fully state the case. I submit that the hon. member, in all fairness, should on that occasion, have explained to that audience that no doubt a very considerable portion of the increase in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police was due to agreements then in contemplation and since carried into effect, whereby the federal government has taken over the policing of the additional provinces of Manitoba, Alberta, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Then the people would have had the full picture. But withholding that explanation, I submit to this house, gives the people a wrong and unfair view of the whole situation, and whatever the intention may be it has the effect of stirring up additional discord, mistrust and discontent.

Now as to whether or not the province of Manitoba was "baited" by this government and induced to allow the federal government to take over its policing, I refer the house to a statement published in the press and prior to the time that this speech was delivered. I have reference to a statement by the Hon. W. J. Major, K.C., Attorney General of Manitoba, which was published in the Free Press of April 8, with regard to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The statement appears under the following headings:

Says Manitoba does not surrender rights in merger of police.

Attorney General Major tells legislature province will save \$125,000 by amalgamation.

Declares union of forces first discussed in Saskatchewan and Alberta, not Ottawa.

That is from the Attorney General of Manitoba, not politically friendly to this government. Continuing, the article goes on:

There will be absolutely no surrender of provincial rights in the agreement with the dominion for the merger of the Manitoba provincial police force with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Hon. W. J. Major, K.C., told the legislature at the night session Thursday.

The attorney general said there would be a saving to Manitoba of at least \$125,000 in police costs, and he pointed out, in reply to labour members, that the amalgamation was not initiated at Ottawa but was discussed first of all in Saskatchewan and Alberta, which were greatly concerned with reduction in expenditure.