

eral (Mr. Dupré) the other evening render it necessary that at least I should emphatically deny the statements he made at that time. May I say that I agree with the ex-Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe) in all that he said as to his reasons for supporting the original motion and for opposing the amendment moved by my hon. friend who is at the moment leading the house (Mr. Guthrie). I will not, therefore, go into the question of why we of the Liberal party are supporting Bill No. 24, to amend the criminal code; the arguments have been made amply clear in the course of the debate. I do wish, however, most emphatically to deny what has been, not merely alleged, but actually stated as a matter of fact by the Solicitor General. I shall read that part of Hansard which contains the remarks to which I refer, so that I may reply to them in due order. I have in my hand Hansard for February 21, and I shall read from the remarks of the Solicitor General as reported at page 2334:

Section 98 was inserted in 1919 and up to 1926 there was no move on the part of my hon. friends, who were then in power, towards the repeal of that provision. Then came the elections of 1925 and both parties were returned with almost equal strength. Then followed the famous letter written by my hon. friends of the Labour party, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Woodsworth) and the hon. member for Vancouver asking the then Prime Minister the price to be paid if he wanted the support of the two members.

Mr. Woodsworth: May I say that there is no member in this corner from Vancouver, and further that no letter such as described by the minister was signed by me. I ask that that statement be withdrawn.

Mr. Dupré: Instead of withdrawing, I will read the letter. It is quoted in Hansard of January 29, 1926, and reads:

Dear Mr. King:

As representatives of labour in the House of Commons, may we ask whether it is your intention to introduce at this session legislation with regard to—

- (a) Provision for the unemployed;
- (b) Old age pensions.

We are venturing to send a similar inquiry to the leader of the opposition.

Yours sincerely,

J. S. Woodsworth,
A. A. Heaps.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre then went on to say—

Mr. Casgrain: What about the letter?

Mr. Dupré: He said:

We sent a similar letter to the right hon. leader of the opposition (Mr. Meighen) and to the leader of the Progressives. Mr. Mackenzie King was good enough to give us the opportunity to present our case in detail, and to-day I received from him the following letter, which I should like to place on Hansard.

Then follows the letter of the present leader of the opposition (Mr. Mackenzie King). As my time is short, I shall read only a portion of this letter.

An hon. Member: Read it all.

Mr. Dupré: It appears in Hansard and any hon. member can read it. The second and third paragraphs read as follows:

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.

Mr. Casgrain: Nothing wrong with that.

Mr. Dupré: 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.

Mr. Fafard: That is the minister's own conclusion.

Mr. Bell (Hamilton): They would have gone out of power if they had not had it.

Mr. Dupré: It was in the name of British justice and British procedure that they asked for the repeal of section 98. My question at the present time is this: Is the Liberal party having recourse to the same tactics in 1932 that it had recourse to in 1926?

An hon. Member: This is 1933.

Mr. Lapointe: You are a year late.

Mr. Dupré: Are they paying a second price? That is my question.

Had that statement been made somewhere on the hustings or by a member of the House of Commons occupying a seat on the back benches I think I should have ignored it altogether, but, when a minister of the crown, from his seat in the house, charges the leader of a former administration with having sold his party to a group of individuals in the house, it calls, when untrue, not only for an emphatic denial, but also for the withdrawal of the statement the moment that denial is given.

May I point out first of all, as will be seen from the text, that the Solicitor General was asked to read the entire letter. He did not do so, but read only a part of it. He gave the following as his reason:

As my time is short, I shall read only a portion of this letter.

I have looked to see how much time the Solicitor General occupied in the course of his remarks. He had forty minutes in which to address the house. I find that what I have