

*The Address—Mr. Drew*

of our primary products, and in the statements of those who are actually engaged in the export business. All across Canada businesses built on export are releasing employees because the government is doing nothing effective which offers any reason for confidence in the optimistic statements contained in the speech from the throne.

The way in which the representatives of the people in this house have been treated by the government in this respect is in keeping with its attitude in many other matters of importance to the people of Canada. When we find that essential information has been kept from parliament in regard to employment, production, and export trade, the suppression of the report on the milling combine simply becomes part of a uniform pattern.

If there has been any tendency to regard that subject as a closed book, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Garson) disposed of any such tendency when he travelled across the country during the past few weeks explaining how virtuous the government had been in dealing with that particular report. In his explanations to the public there was no hint of apology for the flagrant and unqualified breach by the government of a law passed by the parliament of Canada. Not only did he seek to justify the law-breaking by the government, but felt called upon to offer the justification for the action of the millers themselves. In Vancouver, on January 27, according to a Canadian Press dispatch he said:

Had the millers been allowed to engage in competition for price reduction, the whole cost would have fallen on the taxpayers in the form of increase in the flour subsidy.

I have no doubt that the millers will welcome the new special pleader for their cause. He went on to say:

Mr. McGregor missed that point in his report.

That is something we were not told in the last session. We were told a great many things. It was just like a case of hiccoughs; something new came up every time that the Minister of Justice spoke, and most of it had just about as much body to it as the speech to which I referred. But this is a new one. The minister said:

Mr. McGregor missed that point in his report.

Thus we find that the Minister of Justice, in his recent trip of self-glorification and self-justification, indicated quite clearly that he did pass judgment on Mr. McGregor's report. We were under the impression that he had not. His statement in Vancouver would have had no meaning unless it was intended to convey the impression that this had something to do with the government not acting

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upon the report. In fact that was what he was explaining. He said at the same time that had the government prosecuted the millers—and I quote:

There wouldn't have been a case in fifty years when the crown would have looked so cheap.

It becomes necessary to remind the Minister of Justice, and the government which has identified itself with this, including the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott), that the real issue is not whether the government should or should not have prosecuted, but that the government suppressed this report until it was impossible for anyone else to prosecute, even if the government did not feel like doing so, and also that the government suppressed the report at a time when it would have been extremely interesting to the people of Canada to know of the special concern of the government about the milling industry.

A new angle to this unpardonable breach of law by the government has emerged since the last session. It will be recalled that the last of several explanations of the Minister of Justice, which kept occurring to him from time to time for his breach of the law, was that he had discovered how difficult it would be in any event to publish the report within fifteen days. As that was the last explanation offered to this house, and as it was the last explanation for his own conduct, we must presume that it was intended to be taken seriously. Nevertheless we find that two subsequent reports under the Combines Investigation Act have been delivered to the Minister of Justice: one on the glass industry, and one on the match industry. The report on the alleged glass combine was submitted to the minister on December 13. It was published fourteen days later, on December 27. The report on the alleged match combine was submitted to the minister on December 27 and published thirteen days later, on January 9. Thus we have positive evidence, produced by the Minister of Justice, that publication can be made within the fifteen days required by law, and it was with good reason that no one had ever suggested that fifteen days were not adequate. When the Minister of Justice says that never in fifty years would a government have looked so cheap as this government would if it had prosecuted the milling industry, he overlooks the fact that no government has ever been made to look so cheap as this government has by the different explanations he has given for breaking the law.

There are a number of aspects of this report about which little has yet been said. Not only was the law broken; not only did the government fail to take any action on the report itself; not only did it follow a course