

which parliament will have no control but over which the government will have full control—

Mr. Mackenzie King: No, no.

Mr. Hanson (York-Sunbury): —I may be pardoned—

And I ask hon. members to listen to this, as to why my hon. friend wanted this specific question inserted. He said:

—I may be pardoned if I appear a little suspicious that there is some change in plan, or that there may be some change. Of course the Prime Minister—

These are the words I direct attention to:

Of course the Prime Minister now has pledged his word that the question will not be altered.

Still “the” question, that “the” question will not be altered because the Prime Minister has pledged his word with regard to it. In view of the attitude my hon. friend takes in relation to government and parliament with respect to the people, that a pledge does not amount to anything, I am not surprised that he should attach no importance whatever to whether or not I now am to be put in a position where later he can say that I went back on the pledge I gave to the House of Commons. Here are his words:

Of course the Prime Minister now has pledged his word—

Who did I pledge it to? To this house, including my hon. friend the leader of the opposition. And what did I pledge my word to, according to his own statement? That the question will not be altered. Well, I tell him that the question will not be altered because this government attaches importance to its pledged word given in this House of Commons, just as it attaches importance to the pledge that was given to the people of this country. Then my hon. friend says:

—and that, if necessary the question will be put in the bill. So that we have learned something this afternoon.

My hon. friend went further and said, and I ask hon. members if it was not within their hearing that he rose a moment ago and said, “I did not say ‘the’ question but ‘a’ question”. What did he say? He said “the” exact question. Let me read his words, in the first column of page 756 of *Hansard*:

I understood that the general scope of the question would be the same, but the Prime Minister categorically placed upon the records of this house the exact question that would be asked.

How does my hon. friend expect myself and my colleagues to change the wording of this question after he has demanded that the exact question which is now a part of the record and has been all through this debate should be the one that would be inserted in

the bill? A little further on the leader of the opposition says:

. . . now we certainly have got something definite on that point.

Yes, and we are going to hold to it now that we have got something definite and exact. That I think answers so far as the leader of the opposition is concerned, the necessity of the government holding to this particular question in the bill. We have pledged our word to him and to the house that the exact question which I put forward here at the time of the debate on the address would be presented to the people. We have placed it in the bill at the request of the leader of the opposition and other hon. members, and we are going to hold to that question.

Now let me come to the question itself and ask if it is capable of the kinds of interpretation which have been given to it:

Are you in favour of releasing the government from any obligation—

The hon. member for Macleod has said that he does not think that means anything.

Mr. HANSELL: It does not stop there. If it stopped there it would be all right.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: May I say that I cannot follow my hon. friends; I do not know what is in their minds when they say that they think there is some cunning back of this question, and that what the government does not want is to be released from the commitment. The hon. member says that when the people have voted we shall not know whether we are released or not.

Mr. HANSELL: I rise to a point of order.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I beg my hon. friend's pardon. I am mistaken. I said, “the hon. member for Macleod”; I meant the hon. member sitting immediately behind him who spoke a moment ago.

An hon. MEMBER: Bow River.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Yes. I am sorry. It was the hon. member for Bow River who said that when this question was answered it would not have any effect on the government.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): On a point of order, I do not think I ever referred to the Prime Minister as being cunning. I ask the chairman to have the Prime Minister withdraw that statement.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I said that my hon. friend seems to think that there is some cunning behind the question as it is framed; and, if I understood him aright, his point was