

POOR
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PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

D7216

Subject.....

Date..... Publication.....

Tremendous Ovation

On rising to respond to the toast Premier King was accorded a tumultuous ovation, the guests standing up on their chairs and waving hands, and threatening to bring the roof down with their shouts of welcome. The demonstration lasted for fully a minute. Once the hubbub had subsided and quiet had been restored Mr. King thanked the chairman for his kindly remarks, and then added what a pleasure it was for him to come to the city of Quebec, the home of Liberalism. In that connection he briefly sketched the history of the city and showed how the name of its founder was indelibly written into the history of the whole country. It was just as a great source of pride to a man of English descent as anyone else, he said that the history of our country runs back some three hundred years, and that a gentleman of French extraction, by the name of Champlain, was the first to put his foot on the soil of the country.

Coming almost immediately to a discussion of the political situation, Premier King said.

During the campaign previous to the general elections, said Mr. King, he had said that the government, should his party be returned to power, would not, like the previous government, be a one-man government, but would be composed of the best men that the party could surround itself with.

"While I regarded that platform (referring to the Liberal platform of 1919) as a chart," said Mr. King, "there would also be a compass to guide the way, composed of the ablest men I could find, and I am sure that I need not mention any more names than those of my good friends, Lapointe, Bureau, Dr. Beland, Robb, Cardin and Gouin to assure you that as far as the Province of Quebec is concerned that compass has been all right."

*Chart and
Compass*

Majority of One

The Prime Minister stated that it was only a little over three years since the Liberals had come into office, with a majority of 1, after the standing of all parties had been ascertained. This majority, he said, had appeared and disappeared, but to-night it shone more brightly than ever before. The present administration had carried on in office by the side of five British administrations, and had witnessed five general elections in the British Empire since they had been in office, but with the majority of one, the Liberals still remained, and they intended going on until this majority was increased to 21, and if possible, to 100.

The Government had encountered as difficult and rough a sea as was ever met by any administration. Mr. King stated, however, that he did not mean to refer to the previous administration, which had kept the reins of power for a year without any right to do so.

He remarked that he had heard comparisons of the different administrations, but he submitted that it was impossible to make comparisons between administrations which followed the Great War to those which preceded this catastrophe, for the problems were so different as to make fair comparisons impossible.

A Heritage of Debt

The Liberals, he said, had assumed office when conditions had been greatly changed and when Canada was more sensitive to world conditions than at any other time, while even now the markets of Europe, which had a great bearing on Canada, were only beginning to resume their normal state.

"Our worst ills," remarked the Prime Minister, "were those which we inherited from the previous administration. We came into a national estate that was heavily mortgaged." Here he turned to the ladies gathered in the rear of the banquet hall, and remarked that the management of a country was no different from the management of a home. It depends on what there was to spend.

The national debt of the country represented the mortgage, stated the Prime Minister, who then reviewed the financial situation of the country, dwelling on the amount that had to be paid out yearly as interest on the debt, while he also drew a comparison between

*Difficulties of
minority
Government.*

*National
Finance*

W. L. Mackenzie King Papers

Speeches-1922 - 1932

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