

PREMIER KING REFUSES TO BE FORCED INTO ELECTION

Doesn't Propose Contest to Please Opposition Leader; Another Session Rests With Government for Decision

"The responsibility of carrying on the country's affairs has been given us by the people. We have exercised it, notwithstanding all the difficulties and circumstances with which we have been confronted, in a manner which, we believe, has won us a steadily increasing measure of public confidence. Under the circumstances the responsibility of government which we necessarily experience. When we have reason to believe that there are national considerations so imperative as to necessitate an appeal to the electorate, I shall not hesitate to acquit His Excellency the Governor-General with our view and to press for a dissolution of Parliament. When that time comes, I shall be equally prepared to state the reasons to the public."

STILL HAS MAJORITY OF ONE

The statement deals in some detail with the political situation. While not making any specific declaration whether it is or is not the intention of the government to call another session of Parliament before advising dissolution, Premier King observes that the Government first met with a majority of one before the Speaker was appointed. Today, after four sessions and 41 by-elections, the Government has a majority of one without counting the Speaker. "This is surely," he adds, "a record which no other government has ever achieved. It is a record which does not look like any lack of confidence on the part of the electorate such as would necessitate a general election before another session."

REPLIES TO MEIGHEN

He remarks that Mr. Meighen did not hesitate, when Sir Robert Borden resigned in July, 1920, to form a Conservative administration and hold office for a year and a half without any authorization on the part of the people. "Of all people in the world," says Premier King, "it ill-becomes Mr. Meighen to attempt to dictate the time of dissolution."

The text of Premier King's statement follows: "It has been my custom each year, as soon after prorogation as circumstances would permit, to make a review of the work of the session the occasion of an address to my constituents. I have followed the further practice of making this the first of a series of political addresses in different parts of the province or of the Dominion. This practice I intend to follow this year, and I am at present in communication with my friends in North York as to a suitable date and place for a meeting. It has not been possible to arrange this earlier."

MUCH WORK HELD UP

"The recent session of Parliament was a long and very arduous one. It was followed by the West Indies conference, and we were well on into the middle of July before there was opportunity to give consideration to numerous matters arising out of the work of the session, and which we held over to be dealt with when Parliament was re-opened. There was, however, an accumulation of correspondence with which it was impossible to cope until Parliament was in session. It is only within the past few days that I have had opportunity of conference at any length with my colleagues in the Government and fellow-members of Parliament concerning a number of matters demanding their consideration and consideration at the present time."

SEES ATTITUDE CHANGED

"Mr. Meighen is saying we are to have a general election this year. He was very careful not to say that Parliament any more, and that effect, or any other effect, of the confidence in the Government. He was particularly careful when the results of the provincial elections in Saskatchewan were announced, and he recognized that the new redistribution, Saskatchewan would send the third largest delegation to the House of Commons. He was also very careful to recognize that the new redistribution, Saskatchewan would send the third largest delegation to the House of Commons. He was also very careful to recognize that the new redistribution, Saskatchewan would send the third largest delegation to the House of Commons."

MARITIME RESULTS

"The changes of Government in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick is alone responsible for Mr. Meighen's change of attitude. He has not changed in the policies under which, or the manner in which, federal affairs are being conducted. The leader of the Opposition fails to reflect that these provincial elections were fought out on purely local issues, and have no significance federally beyond the fact that our past political history has shown that where the public comes to believe that one party is about to have a lease of power in the Federal arena, it is inclined to balance matters politically by giving its support for the time being to not a few of the provinces to the other party."

OLD DAYS RECALLED

"This was the case in the days when the Conservatives under Sir John A. Macdonald were in power at Ottawa, and most of the provinces became Liberal; also after Sir Wilfrid Laurier

he was so roundly defeated, not having carried a single seat in six provinces out of the nine, and that it was this identical program he put forward anew in the form of a manifesto when Parliament assembled at the last session, and which when presented in the House of Commons on June 2 as an amendment to go in the supply was voted down on a division of 147 to 82, the largest majority recorded against any motion declaratory of party policy in many years, if not in the history of the Parliament of Canada."

FORCES JOIN TOGETHER

"It was noticeable that on that Parliament and Independent members, including the only labor member, joined together to declare their opposition to the platform that Mr. Meighen now offers to the country in the name of his party. In these circumstances, what can there be in anything Mr. Meighen has to offer the country which would justify the bringing on of a general election at this time, to say nothing of a possible change of Government?"

RETAINS MAJORITY OF ONE

"There have been four sessions of the present Parliament. The leader of the Opposition prophesied that it would not survive a single session. It began with a majority of one before the Speaker was appointed. It has today at the end of four sessions, after some 41 by-elections, a majority of one, without counting the Speaker. This surely does not look like any lack of confidence on the part of the electorate such as would necessitate a general election before another session. Under our constitution the term of a single parliament is fixed at five years unless in the opinion of the ministry of the day, or of His Excellency, there exists substantial reasons for a dissolution before the expiration of the full term."

LEGAL RIGHT TO CONTINUE

"Having regard to the provisions of the constitution the present ministry—so long as it is supported by the House of Commons—has the legal right to continue in office until January, 1927, this being five years from the date at which the last of the writs of the election of 1922 were returned. I see no reason to believe that support as we have all along been able to command in Parliament will not continue to be accorded at another session."

UP TO GOVERNMENT

"Whether or not the present government will call another session of parliament is for the government to decide. We do not propose to be stampeded into any dissolution of parliament just to please the leader of the Opposition, or his press. The responsibility of carrying on the country's affairs has been given us by the people; we have exercised it, notwithstanding all the difficulties with which we have been confronted, in a manner which, we believe, has won us a steadily increasing measure of public confidence."

TO TELL APPEAL REASONS

"Under the circumstances the responsibility of advising a dissolution would appear to be quite as great as

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BORDEN GOVERNMENT

"The Conservative government of Sir Robert Borden elected in 1911 held office until 1917 a year beyond the term provided by the constitution. The extension of that year beyond the parliamentary term was brought about by an amendment of constitution during a time of war. Notwithstanding that a general election should have been held once the war was over, or at the very latest at the completion of demobilization, Mr. Meighen did not hesitate when Sir Robert resigned in July 1920 to form a Conservative administration and hold office for a year and a half without any authorization on the part of the people. Of all persons in the world it ill-becomes Mr. Meighen to attempt to dictate the time of dissolution."

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for which they were elected. The Conservative administration of 1891 to 1896 held office to the last hour of the last hour of the full legal term, notwithstanding that during this period of time there were no fewer than five different prime ministers: Sir John A. Macdonald, Sir John Thompson, Sir John Abbott, Sir Mackenzie Bowell, and Sir Charles Tupper. Those were the days when knighthood was in flower."

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