

Mr. STEVENS: It is a distortion.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: There is the position. Notwithstanding that my right hon. friend has a majority in the House of Commons, notwithstanding that he has a majority in the Senate, notwithstanding that, so far as party influence goes, he has a majority in both houses, he says: With the curious notions that are going about to-day, I do not believe I could get consent for the things I want to do; therefore I am going to get this right to do what I please by order in council.

Mr. BENNETT: That is not what was said. What was said was that you could not get consent for legislation by bill that might protect this country in point of crisis, and therefore recourse had to be had to this bill in order that parliament might protect itself against just such ideas. That is what was said.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Well, we will let the Prime Minister's words speak for themselves.

Mr. BENNETT: Exactly.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: May I go a step farther. Ever since there has been a parliament, when a ministry had to deal with a question, it had to subject itself to the laws of parliament, and, if it wished additional powers for any specific purpose, it had to get those powers from parliament. Why should the present Prime Minister be given powers that the great prime ministers of the past, Macdonald, Mackenzie, Laurier, Borden, never even thought of suggesting that parliament should give them? We have not a situation of the sort to-day that demands, such extraordinary powers on the part of a government. Let us go a step further with the Prime Minister's statement:

And from what we know and have seen, we should certainly be opposed with respect to consent.

In other words, he says: We know that parliament would not give its consent to what we say is necessary. Therefore, we are going to get this power in order to do what we please without consulting parliament. But may I point out the significance of the next sentence. Up to the present time, my right hon. friend has been referring to the House of Commons. But parliament consists of the Senate as well as the House of Commons. What does he say about legislation which requires the consent of the Senate?

Then the matter would go its weary way, for there is another chamber to be considered before legislation is enacted; and in the meantime the injury may be done.

In other words: We do not propose to allow the Senate, which is on a par with the Commons in authority, to have any voice in the legislation that we want, we are not going to listen to them, we are not going to permit them any authority.

Mr. BELL (Hamilton): You were going to abolish them.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: The Prime Minister has abolished them in this legislation. He has abolished them effectively. He states he will not even allow their voice to be heard in legislation which may be necessary. Now, Mr. Minister of Trade and Commerce, so there may be no mistake as to the sense, let me read this passage, which I believe will go down in history as the most extraordinary assertion of autocratic intention ever made by any prime minister in the world.

Mr. STEVENS: It is wholly distorted from its context.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: The quotation discloses clearly his belief in force rather than consent in the matter of government—

Mr. STEVENS: No.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING:—and which for that reason I will repeat.

I would not ask this power from any parliament except reluctantly, and I so stated when I introduced the resolution the other day.

Here I make a slight hiatus.

We do not believe that this power will be called into play; nay, more, we sincerely and fervently hope that it will not be. But, sir, what is a man without a weapon in the midst of armed force? What is a man who has no instrument for his protection in the midst of the strife of brigands? Without this power we should be without a weapon that could be used except through a bill in parliament; and with the strange views that obtain in these days there is no assurance that the mind of the government would be sufficiently strong to secure consent for any measure it might introduce. And from what we know and have seen, we should certainly be opposed with respect to consent. Then the matter would go its weary way, for there is another chamber to be considered before legislation is enacted; and in the meantime the injury may be done.

I think I did the Prime Minister a kindness when I read the passage section by section instead of reading it as one paragraph. I must thank the Minister of Trade and Commerce for causing me to give the paragraph in its complete and concise form.

Mr. STEVENS: The right hon. gentleman did not read it in a concise way. He left out a very substantial portion in reading the alleged paragraph.