



C137191

House of Commons
Canada

OTTAWA, February 20th, 1935.

Dear Friend and Constituent,-

Upon looking over my last year's first sessional letter, under date of March 29th, I find that my first paragraph, in fact my first page, is devoted to analyzing the probabilities of when both the federal and Saskatchewan elections were likely to come off. We do not need to cogitate any more about the Saskatchewan elections, as our Conservative opponents have a very vivid recollection of their overwhelming defeat of "horse, foot and cavalry" all along the line, not even one victim of the terrible political debacle being left to tell the gruesome tale.

Not so, however, with the federal election, as it is still in the guessing column as to when it is going to come off. A month or two ago, Ottawa scribes and prophets were predicting an April election. More recently, however, it has transpired that the voters' lists will not be ready until well towards April 15th. Furthermore, I don't see how this session of Parliament can be prorogued by that time. And to go to the polls in April or even the forepart of May, when farmers are on their seed drills and as busy as nailers, would add still further to the unpopularity of the already most unpopular government that Canada has ever been afflicted with. Then again, the annual revision of last summer's basic voters' list, which has not come from the printer, as already indicated, is due for revision according to the Franchise Act, beginning May 15th, to be completed by, I think, July 1st. Obviously, it will be difficult to hold an election during the month and a half while the revision of the list is going on.

Because of these various phases of the question, the conclusion is gaining ground, among those who like to do the figuring, that the election is not likely to come off until late July or possibly after harvest. Candidly, I don't think R. B. himself knows when he is going to the country, as he is leaving that decision to be arrived at as the immediate circumstances look favorable or otherwise.

You will probably be asking yourself, What about King George's Silver Jubilee event, which begins on May 6th, to be followed by a meeting of the representatives of all the Dominions with respect to trade and other matters? This event, coming off at that time, has led to the conjecture that the House might be adjourned for that period, so as to permit Mr. Bennett to attend one more conference in London; possibly with the hope that he might be able to get better results than he did in the abortive empire conference of 1930 and the almost morose than useless London world conference of 1933.

Amidst all this jam of guesswork, in which the government themselves are doubtless engaged, one certain fact stands out, and that is that we must have a federal election some time before the snow flies. And, from our standpoint, it is advisable to be ready at twenty-five days' official notice, as that is the period we are now confined to under the new Franchise Act, instead of sixty days, as formerly. Evidently the Bennett government is of the opinion that the less their record is discussed and the shorter the election the better will be their prospects, in which I am disposed to agree. Because of this, it is all the more important for those who oppose the government and their policy to have their political fences in shape and ammunition ready at hand and all the preliminaries of political warfare ready for the bugle call when it does come.

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