

October 20, to inform the committee of coordination as soon as possible, and not later than October 28, 1935, of the date on which it could be ready to bring the measures provided for into operation. On November 2, as has been mentioned, the committee of coordination adopted a resolution fixing November 18 as the date of entry into force of these recommendations.

Mr. BENNETT: Nos. 2, 3 and 4.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Yes. The Canadian government brought them into force by order in council on November 15, effective November 18.

May I point out another circumstance which I suggest ought to be considered. The government had to consider the entire situation and ask itself what would be the result of bringing parliament together some six weeks later, the first session after a general election. One measure which we felt to be vital to the success of trade in Canada was if possible, a reciprocal agreement with the United States. Certainly no reciprocal agreement with that country could have been negotiated during that period of time had the government been obliged to take immediate steps to bring parliament into session. We would have lost all opportunity of getting that measure underway or securing it at all. A new government taking office after a general election, and after a previous government has held office for more than five years, is faced with a multitude of problems. To have immediately brought parliament together to deal with the question of sanctions would have meant that, so far as the business of the session was concerned, it would have been practically impossible to have had legislation in readiness for hon. members. Moreover, a wholly erroneous impression of the European situation might thereby have been created. If there had been the slightest probability that there would have been objection to not bringing hon. members together for the purpose of obtaining their consent before sanctions were imposed, I say that, notwithstanding all the difficulties there might have been, parliament would have been summoned for that purpose. But we believed—and I think this session has confirmed the wisdom of our decision—that, when they assembled, hon. members would view this matter in the light of all the circumstances, with which the government was faced, and would feel that the government had acted in a way which was most in accordance with their wishes and most in accordance with the will of the Canadian people.

I should like to put before the committee the position in which the country would

have been if we had waited before imposing sanctions until parliament could assemble. This dominion would have been responsible for not having agreed to impose sanctions at a time when practically all other parts of the British empire and other countries members of the league had imposed them. We would have been open to criticism on this score. I think my right hon. friend, had he been in office, would have found, just as we found, ample precedent and authority in the example of the British government with respect to imposing sanctions by order in council, under the act to which I have referred.

I say all this without in any way wishing to indicate that I do not think the hon. member was quite within his rights in bringing up the matter and speaking as he did and, in fact, criticizing the government as he did. I fully expected that criticism would be made. I can only thank the hon. member for the considerate manner in which he has spoken, and I thank the house as well for not having found it necessary to seek to bring any criticism on this score until the last hours in the last day of the session.

Mr. CAHAN: With respect to New Zealand may I say that that country convened a meeting of its parliament and passed the League of Nations Enforcement in New Zealand Act, 1935, on November 24. They delayed until after November 24 to put their order in council into effect. They also provided that within twenty-eight days after the commencement of the next ensuing session, the one after the special session, the regulations would lapse unless parliament should ratify them within twenty-eight days after the next ensuing session. What the Prime Minister has said has some force. It has this force: That a government having serious problems to face must at times face them by taking action for which there may be no clear statutory authority at the time, feeling confident that when parliament meets it will by act of parliament ratify and confirm the action the government has taken. That has to be done frequently, in times of emergency. But when I raised the question at the beginning of the session and suggested an early discussion the Prime Minister asked to have it postponed to a later date, and suggested that at such later date the matter would be brought up.

Some hon. members on this side of the house were waiting until the last bill was brought down expecting that the government would bring down a bill and ask the house to ratify and confirm the action it had taken