

*Unemployment Continuance Act*

There we see what was in the mind of the Prime Minister. He says he needs a weapon. What is the weapon he is going to take?

An hon. MEMBER: And we are going to give him the weapon.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Yes, but it is a weapon to beat your own back and to destroy your own rights. It is a weapon which takes away from the constituents you represent and heard here with respect to all the laws that are passed. That is the weapon you are giving. Now, may I read further what the Prime Minister said, having discovered what was in his mind:

What is a man who has no instrument for his protection in the midst of the strife of brigands?

As the hon. member for Quebec East (Mr. Lapointe) said the other day, he did not suppose that hon. gentlemen opposite would think that that reference was to themselves, because they are the Prime Minister's support. They give him the power, they are the ones that give him whatever enactment he likes. The Prime Minister said:

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.

Note that exception, Mr. Speaker—"except through a bill in parliament." The Prime Minister says he would be without a weapon except through a bill in parliament. What does that mean? Is not a bill in parliament the only weapon that any ministry ought to have the right to use?

Mr. BENNETT: That is what we are getting. The bill is here.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Is not a bill enacted by the people's representatives the only weapon a ministry should have, not the excepted weapon. Is not that the only weapon which the ministry should have? My right hon. friend says:

Without this power we should be without a weapon which could be used except through a bill in parliament.

Mr. BENNETT: And we got the bill.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I challenge anyone opposite to refute this statement. Up to the present time, when a ministry has wished power for any purpose, it has come to parliament and secured the necessary legislation for a specific purpose—not for the purpose of obtaining a weapon that can be used in each and every direction, not for the

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

purpose of getting a weapon that if need be can be used against its own following; it has stated its position to the Commons and the Senate and made such an appeal to reasonableness as would enable it to get the legislation it needed. Here, Mr. Speaker, we are confronted with the difference between government by force and government by consent. With respect to law or government, in the matter of sanctions, there is no alternative except that of force or consent. The Prime Minister says: I will not carry on government by consent of parliament, I am not going to be controlled by legislation, to be enacted by parliament, I am going to secure a weapon that will enable me to govern by force, a weapon that will render me independent of legislation altogether, independent altogether of parliament.

Let us go a step farther. Hon. gentlemen opposite may be a little surprised when they come to realize the extent to which the Prime Minister went in supporting his view. In giving reasons why the authority of parliament should be usurped, what did he say in the next sentence? Let hon. members listen to this:—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.

Mr. BENNETT: Hear, hear.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Now, I ask you, Mr. Speaker, is there anything left? The Prime Minister says—this refers to his own following.

Mr. BENNETT: No, it does not.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: They are the majority, they have got the power.

Mr. BENNETT: Parliament.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: The Prime Minister tells us now that it refers to parliament. Very well. He says: I feel that to-day parliament would not do the things I want to have done. Therefore, I am going to take this power to do what I please, whether parliament is in session or not. That is the position, that is the only meaning the words can have.

Mr. STEVENS: You have taken it away from its context.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Not at all.

Mr. STEVENS: No, you have segregated it from its context.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I will bring the sentences all together afterwards. In the meantime let us have no doubt about it.