

the confidence of the people of this country at the present time as the leader of a war Administration, by what authority does he presume to carry on the Government of this country?

I might quote at considerable length from the statements which were given to the people of this country at the time as to the purposes of the late ministry. I shall not take up the time of the House in quoting at any great length from the different statements made; two or three will I think, be pertinent enough. As to the purpose of the previous Unionist Administration, I shall quote only from the ex-Prime Minister (Sir Robert Borden), who formed that Government, and from my right hon. friend who is leading the Government at the present time, and I will ask my hon. friend after he has listened to these statements, to be good enough to say whether he is prepared to stand up in this Parliament and affirm that the ministry which he is leading today is the same in aim and purpose as the ministry which was formed in 1917.

Here are one or two statements made by the ex-Prime Minister at the time the Unionist Administration was formed. Speaking at Toronto on November 21st, 1917—the quotation will be found in the Mail and Empire of the following day—the then Prime Minister, the present member for Kings, said:

My purpose in forming a Union Government was to bring within it such a personnel as would be thoroughly representative of all those elements of the population of Canada that were willing to stand behind the Government in its efforts to win this war, and to fight the battle for humanity, for civilization and the fate of the world.

Speaking at Oshawa on Nov. 26, 1917, as quoted from the Toronto Globe of the following date, the ex-Prime Minister (Sir Robert Borden) said:

Union Government—does any man know of any reason why there should not be union and national unity in this country when national peril confronts us? The issue is whether the war effort of Canada is to be maintained, or whether Canada is to get out of this war. That is the issue.

That was what the right hon. the then Prime Minister of this country told the people at the time of the last election. He distinctly stated that the issue was whether the war effort of Canada was to be maintained or whether Canada was to get out of the war. Can my right hon. friend who is now leading the Government (Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen) describe the issue before the country at the present

time in those terms? Can he find anything which will justify him in maintaining an administration on the basis on which the Unionist Government was returned at the last election?

Speaking at Milton on November 29, 1917, as will be seen from the Toronto Star of November 30, my right hon. friend the member for Kings, the then Prime Minister, made a statement which is to be found quoted in several papers. I shall quote from two because they are significant:

"There is only one issue after all in this campaign," said Sir Robert, "whether we shall keep our pledge or bond given to those men at the front, or whether we shall abandon them when they need our help most."

I will ask my right hon. friend to pay particular attention to these words, which are taken from the Toronto Star:

"There is only one issue in this campaign, whether we shall keep our pledge, etc."

The Mail and Empire, referring to the same speech, quotes the right hon. gentleman in these terms:

There is only one issue in this campaign—only one that I can see to-day—

Observe, Mr. Speaker, my right hon. friend repeated the statement—only one.

—whether Canada shall maintain her effort in the war and support the men who have gone forth on the pledge of her honor, or whether Canada shall relax her effort, withdraw from the war, and practically leave these men to consider themselves abandoned and betrayed.

I submit that when the people of this country were told by the then Prime Minister that there was only one issue—only one—in such plain terms that every man, woman and child in this country could understand the nature and meaning of it, the services of the administration elected on that issue were at an end when the issue ceased to exist; and when a Government comes along two years after the war is over and attempts to carry on the affairs of this country without appealing to the electorate for any vindication of its position, it is usurping the authority of the people. I ask my right hon. friend what becomes of the theory that government is carried on in virtue of the consent of the governed? The governed gave their consent on one issue, an issue which has long since passed. Yet the hon. gentleman presumes to carry on to-day without even consulting the electorate. He ignores them in the most flagrant manner.

The Prime Minister of that day, however, was not the only one who described

to the people of this country what the issue was. My right hon. friend himself made a good many speeches during that campaign. He and two of his colleagues at the time were, I think, the first to address a large public meeting in Canada, the one that was supposed, to use his own words, "to sound the appeal of the new government." That meeting, as he may recall, was held in the City of Winnipeg. It was largely attended, and an account of it is given in the Manitoba Free Press of October 23rd, 1917. A three-page report appears in that issue of the Manitoba Free Press, and it was quoted all over this country. The hon. member for Marquette (Hon. Mr. Crerar) was one of those who spoke along with my right hon. friend, and the Hon. Minister of Immigration and Colonization, who is also President of the Privy Council at the present time (Hon. J. A. Calder). They were all present, and these are the words of my right hon. friend. He said that his purpose, and that of the colleagues appearing with him on the platform was to present the principle and to show forth the spirit that had brought them together, and "to sound the appeal of the new government." He was dealing both with the principle and with the spirit of the new Government. As he listens to his own words, I want to ask him whether he thinks that principle and that spirit apply to his administration at the present time. I will not quote the whole of his speech; I shall merely give extracts:

"Our Government, for which we stand to-night, is founded on the rock of compulsory service, and on that rock we will still build it."

Will he stand up in this Parliament and say at the present time that his Government is founded on the rock of compulsory service? and that on that rock he is still building?

Mr. BUREAU: It is merely an aggregation.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: To continue:

I want to make it as clear as I can that the only way Canada can give the verdict of "carry on" is to vote for the Union Government. We can only vote for or against the Government.

In other words, he describes the issue as being that of "carrying on." I admit that the phrase to carry on might be used as a cry for his present administration, but I think he had a different purpose in mind at that time. I do not think my right hon. friend intended to have that cry serve a double purpose. Then he said further:

We can only vote for Borden and Union administration, or vote for a man who, no

matter under what flag he may be running will be a follower of an administration headed by Sir Wilfrid Laurier. This vote for Borden or Laurier is a vote to carry on the war or to quit.

Now, may I ask my right hon. friend, when he tells the country that the whole question at that time was between Borden and Laurier, whether that is the question before the country at the present time? Between Borden and Laurier? Where, may I ask my right hon. friend, does he come in? My right hon. friend was modest at that time. He was careful to exclude himself. He did not presume to stand alongside of those distinguished gentlemen as being equal to them in political stature. But he has changed his attitude since. Here is another sentence from the speech he delivered then, and I would call his attention particularly to it. He said:

There never was a clearer issue before the people than today. It is simply an issue of Union Government and a vigorous prosecution of the war, or Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Canada's virtual withdrawal from the war.

I think my hon. friend knew better than to say what he did say in reference to Sir Wilfrid Laurier at that time, but apart from that portion of the quotation, let me repeat what he said as to the issue itself:

It is simply an issue of Union Government and a vigorous prosecution of the war.

Is that the issue at the present time? I am sure my right hon. friend cannot lay claim to office in virtue of those terms. My right hon. friend concluded his speech with this reference which is interesting:

I appeal to the people of Manitoba. I appeal to the people here, to give to this Government its mission, to the Prime Minister of this country his mission, to carry on. He is the man who will perform the task.

Now what was my right hon. friend aiming at in that remark, when he said that day, speaking about the Prime Minister, "He is the man?" He did not then say "I am the man"; but that is what he is saying to-day. He is telling the people of Canada to-day that the verdict which was given in 1917 was a mandate to him to carry on the Government of this country. Now I say that unless he is prepared to stand up and make that statement here, in the presence of his colleagues and the members of the House generally, neither he nor his Government has any authority to carry out what they propose to do and they are acting in direct violation of