

That was August 22 1934. We are now told that these lists will not be in readiness before April 15, 1935. I had stated in my letter to the Prime Minister that in my opinion it was obvious that the lists ought to be completed by September, having in mind the likelihood, which I thought he himself would realize, of his own candidates being defeated, and that the country would expect a general election thereafter. But what I anticipated at that moment was, as I have already said, that we should be told that somebody else had been responsible for the delay and for the lists not being in readiness. I wish therefore to make it quite clear, as the Prime Minister himself in his acknowledgment conceded, that the franchise commissioner was in no way responsible, because up to the time the Prime Minister's letter was written on August 22 no returning officers had been gazetted, and the franchise commissioner could not begin his work until after that time.

Let me direct attention to the wording of one paragraph of the Prime Minister's reply. Perhaps the Prime Minister will see in it why I have just a little suspicion about the value of any or of all his social legislation or, indeed, any legislation that he might seek to have put upon the statute books. In my letter I made the statement:

I think you will agree that the electorate should not be deprived of its right to have available at any and all times the machinery necessary for the holding of a general election.

That was a statement of the right of the electorate to have, not on some statute book but available and ready at all times, the machinery necessary for the holding of a general election. How does the Prime Minister answer me? He begins with the words: "I quite agree with you," but the agreement is not with me at all; all he agrees to is as follows: "That the machinery for the conduct of general elections should always be upon the statute books." There is a great deal of difference in having machinery on the statute books, and having it available and ready. The machinery is on the statute books now, but according to the statement of the Secretary of State the lists will not be available till April 15 and we cannot have a general election until that date. I say that the answer given there by the Prime Minister was a sidestepping of the real issue and, may I say, it accounted for my answer to him this afternoon, that I thought the delay in the preparation of the lists had been deliberate. The Prime Minister knew as well as anyone that the franchise commissioner could not begin his work until after the returning officers had been appointed. The

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

Prime Minister knew as well as anyone possibly could that when I spoke about having lists available at any and all times for a general election I meant exactly what I said. I did not mean having them on the statute books but that the provisions in the statute should be such that the electorate would have available at any and all times whatever machinery was necessary for the purpose. We have not those lists available, and, apparently, according to what has been stated, we cannot have a general election before April 15.

In these circumstances I am confronted with this situation: If I do what I should like to do, what I said at the end of last session I would do, that is, move an amendment to the motion that has been proposed and seconded this afternoon, to the effect that this government does not enjoy the confidence of the people and that we should have an immediate dissolution, I shall be told that such procedure is very heroic on my part, knowing full well from what the Secretary of State said the other afternoon, that we cannot have any election until at least April 15, if not later, and that all my talk about the government not enjoying the confidence of the people and the need for a general election is perfect nonsense, and beside the mark. Before I close I shall indicate what I think wise in the circumstances.

Having cleared up that point, let me say a word in regard to the Prime Minister's broadcast. I hope hon. members will observe that he has made no less than six nationwide broadcasts, each running over half an hour, in which he has set forth his policies and also attacked the opposition, and that in addition we have to-day before us for the first time since Thursday last the speech from the throne, with which as leader of the opposition, I am expected to deal at some length. I am supposed, I imagine, by hon. members and the country, to deal also with the speeches of the Prime Minister. Obviously I cannot in any short compass of time begin to attempt to answer many of the misleading statements that have been made, and, therefore, this evening I do not purpose to attempt to answer many of the things the Prime Minister has said. I shall reserve that for a later occasion, and, if I can be as fortunate as he appears to have been in getting the wherewithal to have nationwide broadcasts, I shall undoubtedly avail myself of the opportunity to speak to the people of this country through the medium of the radio.

May I immediately deal very briefly with what the Prime Minister has said in the broad-