

# PREMIER MEIGHEN OUTLINES THE CONSERVATIVE POLICY

## In the Course of a Brilliant Address Before the Electors of Queen's County the Prime Minister Reviews the History of Canada Since the Beginning of the King Regime, and Gives in Detail the Facts of the Customs Probe and So-Called Constitutional Issue.

Speaking for upwards of an hour in a crowded audience in the Strand Theatre Wednesday night, Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen, Prime Minister of Canada, referred in opening to his last appearance in Charlottetown, about a year ago, when by reason of extraordinary conditions he had the greatest difficulty in making his voice heard throughout the hall. From that standpoint conditions were a lot better this evening, and there was also much improvement in other points as well.

"There have been great changes since. Much water politically has flowed under the bridge, and it has become my duty and the duty of those others responsible for public affairs federally to address the people of Canada once again, an election being upon them. You do not need to have any extended outline of the events which led up to this. The events preceding the last election were in a measure, I believe, the Liberal party in the parliament ended in 1925 had 117 members. This was a majority of one over Conservatives and Progressives alike. The Conservatives were only fifty, the Progressives some sixty-five. After the election the House stood 116 Conservatives, 101 Liberals, and the remainder mostly Progressives, with some Labor and some Independent. In seven provinces out of nine the Conservative party led by large majorities. Indeed, wherever we were able to confine the public attention to the issues of the time, instead of to still more imaginary issues of the future, we received a triumphant verdict from the Canadian people.

**The Campaign in Quebec.**

"Unfortunately in the province of Quebec, as in previous contests in that province, campaigns on other subjects and personalities were conducted. Had it been conducted on the fiscal issue upon which we waged political war in the Eastern Provinces, in Ontario, in the West and everywhere else, we would certainly have been triumphant in Quebec, because if there is any province in Canada more firmly and definitely protective than another it is the province of Quebec. Our enemy, knowing that, determined that they would overcast the sky with all sorts of political threats and imaginary political perils. And they conjured up another war, this time a Turkish war, which was going to take place if the Conservative party were returned to power!

"By such tactics as those they imagined once more to confuse the minds of the electors, to deceive them, and obtain the verdict on issues which were purely bogus and fictitious, thereby accounting for about two thirds of all whom in the whole Dominion they elected to parliament.

"The Progressive party, in the balance of power, and as a consequence the Prime Minister, who declared his intention of meeting Parliament and letting Parliament decide which party should control public affairs, took care first to address to Parliament in the Speech from the Throne a long series of political promises—a great legislative bill of fare wholly designed to suit the Progressive palate—which he was going to pass and which had in only a minor degree or not at all been discussed in the previous election. In a word, he contrived in the Speech from the Throne to compel the Progressives to vote against their own program and to keep him in power.

"I don't think more flagrant political bribery was ever staged in this Canadian arena. The consequence was that he succeeded, on the vital vote, by a majority of three, and since that time the legislative record of Parliament has been a mere succession of pacts and deals and compromises whereby the late Government succeeded in attaching such Progressive votes to hold them in power.

"There was nothing done all this time in laying out the program upon which the late Government went to the country. Everything that was accomplished was merely in the nature of a concession, a piece of a great system of log-rolling, to enable Mr. Mackenzie King to hold on to power from day to day."

**The Customs Probe.**

Mr. Meighen then went on to speak of the events leading up to the Customs probe. The attack that was made upon the late Government was not on a point of public policy or of legislation, but upon the honesty and efficiency of its administration. It came from the Hon. Mr. Stevens, of Vancouver, whose charges not only startled the House but amazed the whole country. These charges were indeed so astonishing that there could be no possibility of refusing investigation. Consequently a committee was appointed, consisting of four Conservative and four Liberal members; and, as a ninth member,

alone three firms got in no less than 150 tons, though the law of Canada forbids the importation of any such goods under any conditions. It was not a matter of evading the duty; it was a matter of direct violation of the law. There could be no practice more deleterious to public health than that the smuggling of prison goods from the United States should continue in our country. The evidence showed that these goods inevitably are laden with disease, more so than other products, and carry the germs of disease direct into the people's homes. The practice of importing such articles became wholesale over a space of years, and in one year alone they came in by tonnage per month. At this point, at the Mounted Police of Canada had shown they could stop it, the Mackenzie King Government took the Mounted Police off for interfering with their friends, and refused any longer to allow them to take part in the customs probe. He also shows that in relation to seized liquor—that is to say, liquor that is nearly always poison, produced illicitly or imported illicitly and seized by the Government of Canada, a practice had grown up in drinking purposes—sold to the Minister of the previous administration. Not only Mr. Bureau, but Mr. Bolvin as well, was shown to have sold that liquor at ridiculous prices, and Mr. Bolvin was shown to have disposed of no less than 180,000 gallons actually used for drinking purposes—sold to his friends to be disposed of for those illicit purposes; and the friends who got the liquor cheated the country out of over \$700,000.

**Justice Perverted**

"The evidence showed also that the Department was used merely as a political engine, that even the late Minister, Mr. Bolvin, whom they appointed as the man to start in to remedy the situation, even he was guilty of such action as this—A man of the Province of New Brunswick was three times convicted of making poisonous whiskey and disposing of it illicitly. On the third conviction he was sentenced to three months in prison and to a three months imprisonment. This was in the month of August, 1925. The Premier of New Brunswick wrote down and stated that this man, Moses Aziz, was a very strong Liberal, 'a friend,' as he expressed it, 'of the common cause,' and that he had changed so that he would not necessarily have to be imprisoned. The next thing that happened was that the candidate for the riding wrote the Minister, Mr. Bolvin, and told Mr. Bolvin that he would have to interfere and stop the process of conviction. The reason was that this boot-licker was necessary to him in the pending election. He put that not only in writing, but put it twice, calling upon Mr. Bolvin, as the Liberal Minister to help him, the Liberal candidate, to stop the conviction of Moses Aziz, and to get the courts of justice for corruptible and debauching purposes. And Mr. Bolvin did it. As the sentence had already been given, he had the Magistrate wired through his own office not to issue a warrant of arrest until he should see this member of the House, and he saw this gentleman until several weeks had passed. Aziz only went to jail about the end of April last. In England the government of Ramsay MacDonald was defeated by an overwhelming majority in the House of Commons for not doing their duty they withdrew the prosecution before it went to trial on the ground that this man had been credited with such service in the war,—for indeed he had lost both feet,—that he should not be punished. There was something to be said for their action, but they had stepped in and thwarted the course of justice; therefore, the sense of Englishmen of the inviolability of the law was outraged, and they would tolerate no such thing. But the Government of Mackenzie King disposed of the case of Moses Aziz after the sentence was pronounced, when they had no authority to interfere for any purpose whatever; when they had no more to do with it than you or I,—purely to help one of their candidates in the election. All this was shown by the evidence before the committee, and much more.

**Liberals Denounce Government.**

Continuing, Mr. Meighen cited the criticism of the Toronto Globe, the leading Liberal organ, upon the administrative record of the King Government as disclosed by the Customs enquiry. Mr. Meighen had in his possession letters from many Liberals throughout Canada containing similar denunciations. A perusal of the evidence shows that everything in the way of political scandal in the past history of Canada fades into insignificance beside this disclosure. It shows that there was a complete breakdown of negligence and worse than negligence—deliberate concealment and fraud—to the loss of millions to the people of Canada, had been permitted by the then Government. All this after the Government had been begged, time and again, not by politicians but by non-partisan organizations of business men, to try to do something to give the honest manufacturers and workmen in this country a fair chance to compete in their own markets.

"Mr. Mackenzie King is now trying to get out of the matter by saying that the committee did not censure the Government. True, it did not use the word censure. They did not phrase the report as strongly as they should have done. But it is to be remembered that five out of the nine members of the committee were friendly. The Conservative members protested

against the report, not because it was wrong, but because it was not consistent with the evidence. The evidence demanded that the report go further. This, however, was as far as the Liberal members felt that they ought to go. Just think what must have been the position of the Government when its own supporters went so far as they did in their report. Mr. Meighen then reported the portions of the report of the committee, which declared that the Customs service had degenerated in efficiency, that this process had been greatly accelerated in the last few years, and that apparently the Minister of Customs had failed to appreciate and properly discharge the responsibilities of his office. Another quotation from the report showed that officers of the Customs Department, when they made recommendations of certain facts in connection with the prosecution of violators of the law, had a conference with the Minister beforehand as to the nature of the facts to be submitted, and that this conference might greatly alter the complexion of the charges.

Other recommendations of the report were referred to by Mr. Meighen, including the dismissal and retirement of several officials and the collection of millions of money which the Department had utterly neglected to collect.

**Inactivity of Government**

"When the report came in they moved for its adoption. Mr. Stevens moved an amendment that should be added to the report words to the effect that the Prime Minister and members of his Government had knowledge of the rapid degeneration of the Customs Department long months before the investigation, and that they failed to know the facts, to take any effective step to apply a remedy was wholly indefensible, and that the conduct of Mr. Bolvin was utterly unjustifiable. In substance also the Stevens amendment declared the conduct of the Government to be wholly indefensible. This constituted as plain and direct words of censure as ever were addressed to an administration in the world's history.

"The Prime Minister has called me to account, at some meeting recently, for using the words 'indefensible.' The Government had been charged with conduct which was 'wholly incapable of defense' and in using the word 'indefensible' he charged deliberate misrepresentation on my part. I would ask the best student of English here to draw any sensible distinction between the two phrases, 'wholly incapable of defense,' and 'wholly indefensible.' (Laughter.)

"After that amendment was proposed a debate took place for two or three days. Progressive after Progressive notified the Government that they would vote against that amendment. Even Mr. Kennedy, the Progressive member on the Committee, rose like a man in his place and declared that the evidence justified the Stevens amendment. (Applause.)

"Then the Government took fright. They got one of their allies, Mr. Woodsworth, of Winnipeg,—the man who thinks the greatest crime in the world is to make any money—to move a sub-amendment. It was chiefly verbal. The only point is that it struck out the Stevens amendment. The purpose was this, that if they could get the Progressives to be satisfied with the sub-amendment the House would never have got the opportunity of voting on the Stevens amendment. This was resisted. Progressive after Progressive rose again and declared that they could not face their constituents if they took any step which prevented censuring the administration.

"The vote came on Friday night, the 26th of June, and the Woodsworth sub-amendment was defeated. The Government was defeated in the course of the sitting of a parliament. No precedent existed nor any reason whatever, why we should be refused dissolution. We have in 1868, an absolute right to dissolve by one thing only—if at the time we asked there was a motion of censure pending against us we would have to wait until that motion was decided. There was none. That is why this change was made. There are those who complain that we should have gone back and had a formal prorogation, that the Government should have completed the work of the session before dissolving parliament. I do not think that any man so effervescent or so transparent as to propose for a man like Mr. Forke who himself voted that we were not a Government, to claim now that we should have come back and acted as a Government. No man fit for office in any country would do such a thing. We took the course that Governments have taken from time immemorial; we dissolved parliament at once. (Applause.)

"Sir Wilfrid Laurier dissolved parliament in exactly the same way in 1911. I found out about the dissolution several weeks ago, in the street. But we never complained about the constitutionality of the action. There was nobody at that time who had a chronic affliction of constitutional phlebitis. (Laughter.)

**Mr. King's Attitude**

"It would seem, however, that always when Mr. Mackenzie King is out of power the constitution is in danger. You remember back in 1921? Responsible Government was in terrible danger then. It was described as a usurper, overthrowing responsible government, though we had carried every vote in the House by fairly substantial majorities. We were governing by order-in-council then, he said! I don't know how he got into power, we showed him the floor of the House that in one year he had passed more orders-in-council than had ever been passed in a year in Canadian history. (Laughter.) I got up and asked: 'Where

in the world is responsible government now?' What was my answer? Just a laugh! They laughed to think how successfully they had fooled the people of Canada.

"Take another phase of the situation, the proposal of the Prime Minister to dissolve Parliament rather than be censured. Is that the action of a wholly responsible government? Responsible government means the absolute responsibility of a government to the parliament—the right of parliament to pass upon the government. Do you think you uphold responsible government by enabling a Prime Minister to choke and strangle a party in order to prevent a motion of censure? If you deny that, representative of the Throne the right to maintain parliamentary institutions, to maintain the full authority of parliament over government, then you are not upholding parliamentary rights, you are making the Government a dictator and a dictator over parliament. (Applause.)

"We are told they have never been refused a dissolution in England for 100 years. That is so. But Governments have been refused dissolution in British Dominions many times in that period. Do you ever know of any Prime Minister in a thousand years, whether in England or in any British Dominion who ever asked for dissolution in the middle of a debate on a vote of censure? (Applause.) I have had careful enquiry made over the records of every Government, and I stand on their authority to say that never has a Prime Minister in a British Dominion or in Great Britain asked for dissolution while the Government was under review by a vote of censure in the House. The first to take that course is Mr. Mackenzie King.

"As I said before, every time Mr. Mackenzie King gets out of power things go wrong with the constitution! Unless he is in power somebody is usurping; responsible government is in danger! A queer state of affairs! His first attempt was on the Governor-General, the representative of the Throne, made in Parliament before His Excellency and myself had even got together. Plainly, then, he intended to launch a campaign against the Governor-General of this Dominion. But he learned his lesson. His reaction came, and he found it was to be a battle between the representative of the Crown and himself, all the more pity for himself. (Loud applause.) Now there is a change of tactics, and the villain of the piece is not the Governor-General at all, but myself. (Laughter.)

"If that is all, then there is no danger of constitutional issues—if I am the only guilty party. For the people will pass upon me on the 14th of this month. And as long as the people can do that there is no constitutional issue to be questioned. But it is plainly to be seen that this charge is made because the first attempt failed.

**Steered a Consistent Course**

I have nothing to retract from the position I have taken in the past. I have steered a consistent course. I believe the people of Canada are interested more in an honest administration of affairs than in any bogus talk about constitutional issues. (Applause.) As some workman in Cape Breton expressed it to me, 'We have a constitutional question, all right, but it is in our stomachs. We intend to tell Mackenzie King Government just what our constitutional position is!'

"Still, when you think it over, I suppose if you were the head of a government which stood censured by its own friends, which was compelled to go out of office under clouds as black as ever faced any issue in the world, you would raise any question in your mind as to getting away from that! You would take care to give any thought to the liabilities upon which you were dethroned. But I venture to suggest that the people of Canada are interested keenly in the administration of affairs, especially when they find a government with an indictment of 500 pages of evidence of unmitigated censure; when they find where the majority were their friends. They are not likely to give that government a certificate of character and say, 'That is the Government we want to send back to power.'

**Mr. Meighen's Tariff Policy**

"I want first of all to say that in matters of public policy we stand just where we stood in our appeal of 1925. We stand for a reasonable protective policy for Canada in fiscal matters. We stand for the application, not of high protection, never have I said in my political life,—that adjective is just the invention of our political foes in order to get something they can attack; but we do say for the application of the protective principle, thoroughly, from end to end of the program, on all products produced in our Dominion; on agricultural products, on manufacturing products, on everything. We believe in the application of a reasonable duty against all of them for protective purposes. Can anything be clearer than that? (Applause.)

"We believe in giving to the Canadian producers of all classes the advantage in their market which the producers of other countries enjoy in theirs. We do not believe in giving the competitors, whether of our farmers or our industrial workers, not only what they have now, a monopoly of their own market, but an equal share in our market, in the interests of our country. We insist upon the consistent application of the protective principle everywhere. Now can language be clearer than that? It is not important at all,—it is not necessary, that we have a high tariff. Infinitely

more necessary,—the only thing necessary, is that we have a protective principle consistently in our tariff all the time. (Applause.) Give a tariff where all our products are without discrimination protected sufficiently to give our producers a chance in their own markets, which their competitors enjoy in theirs. It is not essential that it be high, but it is essential that it be permanent.

**How Tariff Effects a Country**

"There is nothing more injurious than to have a Government dicker with the tariff, striking one industry this year and another industry the next year. Nothing could be worse for a country than to have the uncertainty and timidity which follows, because under such a condition there is no expansion of industrial enterprise possible. On the contrary, there is contraction and loss, even though at the time we may be blessed with good natural production and good crops. Industry will cease to flourish, employment will be less, and the sons and daughters of our homes will be compelled to go elsewhere. This has been our position exactly these five years. We have had magnificent crops. Last year's was the finest in our history. But we have sold away too much of our natural estate; we have disposed of it from year to year, feeding the factories of the United States. We want stability in our tariff conditions so that men will know they can depend on the markets with the same assurance as their competitors. Then those of all the diversified capacities which compose a nation will be able to find work and employment for their talent at home.

"I want to say to the people of Prince Edward Island that there is no other way in the world for us to progress industrially. If we were situated a thousand miles from our great competitor the United States, we might discuss other means. But we have no option in the world. We cannot take any other course, no matter how we might like to. At the very cost of our industrial life we must maintain a consistent tariff policy.

**One Policy For All**

"That being so, all classes must come in under that policy, and all sections. The agricultural class must come in. It is absurd that after the Americans raised their tariff, after they stopped their tariff on competing on an equitable basis with theirs, that we should continue to admit their farm products unrestricted into Canada, to sell against the products of our own people.

"My first step in tariff revision would be to put up against the United States on farm products a tariff just as high as they have against theirs. It just as difficult for them to compete against the farmers of Canada as they have made it for us to compete against their farmers. (Applause.)

**The Maritime Provinces**

"The King Government in tariff matters has discriminated against the Maritime Provinces. They have done so in this, that they were in parliament courting an alliance with the Progressive party, all through 1925 and still more emphatically in the parliament which ended last month. Those Progressives were mostly from Western Canada. Every concession was for them, and they were again the interests of the Maritime Provinces. Do you think industry in the Maritime Provinces today is what it was in 1921? It is not. Tariff changes have discriminated against the basic productions of these provinces. The industrial shores of Nova Scotia have contracted alarmingly. The basic industries upon which 40 percent of the people wholly depend have been ruined. Is it not important to the people of Prince Edward Island that the market for their produce over there, which existed for years ago, should be revived? Isn't it the best you have yet? Foreign markets are not so important as the home market. If you let it go down your condition materially may be as good. Furthermore, your own taxes are bound to continue higher than they otherwise would, because there are so many to pay them. Keep your home market. At all costs! (Applause.)

**"Sane Consistent Protection"**

"It is essential for these Maritime Provinces that a policy be pursued which enables their great underlying, fundamental industries to get along, and that certainly is not being pursued today. So I say stand by a sane, protective policy, reasonably but consistently, insist on a stable, fiscal policy for this country, and if you do that, certainly the doors of prosperity will open again. We will not then be dependent on harvesting grain. We will be a diversified country. We will be no longer a country spending our millions to try to cajole emigrants to come here to take the place of our sons and daughters who have gone. We will be a country where our difficulty will be to keep emigrants out for the United States is spending millions to keep them out today, and they can't do it. . . .

"Now do not let anybody say I am decrying Canada, because I decry the policy of the country. I think we have a finer country than the United States ever had. (Applause.) They have certain resources more abundant than ours, but they have not the variety; they have not those most precious of all natural resources that we have so abundantly; furthermore

they have not that average of education, nor a climate so broad-gressed in their range of evolution anything like we have. We now have our own transportation system of the world. We have tremendous water power, these elements that are so fundamental. We can make a wonderful country, but first of all secure a stable policy, and we must insist upon strict accountability of public affairs for their public use. We must insist on efficient, honest administration, both in public and in private. That you insist on both is my appeal to you.

I appeal confidently to the facts of Prince Edward Island, evidence heightened by the fact that you have in your county of Queens County two candidates, worthy of your praise; I am grateful to you for your Provincial Government, the Hon. Mr. Stewart, for a man of the type of the Hon. Mr. Myers, who has served the people so well, for public affairs a larger sphere. I think I do not know Canada a better representative of an agricultural community than Mr. Myers, and I am well convinced of that tonight. (Applause.)

Mr. Messervy has served well in the past session, absent; taking a keen interest in all matters that come before him, and attending closely to his County. Both are deserving of your confidence, both principles of policy and for devotion of public affairs. Therefore I think this contest will do itself honor to send to Parliament on the 14th of this month by record majorities the County of Queens. (Loud applause.)

**Organized Armies Attack Sea**

(Canadian Press)

VANCOUVER, B. C., July 29.—Having struck at the great Steller sea lions between northern salmon run in the Dominion fisheries cruiser Columbia waters on its annual expedition. The first was organized in 1922.

The second was the slaughter of rocky islets in the St. George group, south of Claverton in Queen Charlotte Sound, an objective of the Givendy's. This is one of the three greateries of the northern coast. Steller's sea lions annually aggregate in the breeding season, patrol reached the rocky islets were concentrated in greatest numbers and where were hundreds of pups but a few weeks old.

By congregating at their breeding haunts, the sea lions were able to protect their young from their helplessness, the huge monsters leave themselves open to the organized machine attacks made on them by the enemy. There is nothing easy about the job of the machine gunners. The machine gunners are always obliged to leave their mother ship and go after the open boats.

Breaking up the bands of lions just before the schools reach the coast on the west coast, has been the most recent result achieved. Another been noted in the reduction of damage to nets and gear of fishermen of Rivers Inlet, Smith Inlet, the two fishing grounds, but in the case of Smith Inlet, the net was broken to bits and the net was torn to what is was former.

**Indian Hop Gatherers Replenish**

(Canadian Press)

VICTORIA, July 29.—For years the gathering of the hop in British Columbia and other sections of the Pacific west has been associated with the Indians, hundreds of them each year are transported to sections of the country to carry out the hop gathering. The Indians should be thanked for this industry, has never explained, but the fact is this season the red men and their families from all sections of the hop fields are engaged by the hop growers to their other vocations, fishing and logging.

But now the Indians are supplanted by white labor. Hop in British Columbia will be to Hon. E. D. Barrow, who few Indians should be thanked for this industry, has never explained, but the fact is this season the red men and their families from all sections of the hop fields are engaged by the hop growers to their other vocations, fishing and logging.

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**Pitched Ball Kills St. John**

SAINTE JOHN, N. B., July 29.—Wellesley Street, 19, 20, and 21, Street, Saint John, died from effects of being hit over the head by a pitched ball here tonight. Price was a member of the National Baseball team, who was playing a game with the St. John's Baptist's team. A fatal ball was pitched by Dalton, the victim died at the hospital. Mrs. Price, a widow, and the victim's friends in Kings County.

# The Liberals Themselves Think it Time for a Change