Jessy Gong

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Social 10

Mrs. Kendal

R.B. Bennet had better response to the Great Depression than Mackenzie King.

There were two Prime Ministers, R.B. Bennet and Mackenzie King who served for Canada during the Great Depression in 1930s. They had different opinions and measures for improving conditions for Canadians during the Great Depression from two opposite parties. R.B. Bennet, the leader of the conservation party, was generous and determined person who cared a lot about the people and did much effort for them. Mackenzie King, the liberal party’s leader, was a cold, stingy, and stubborn person. Although both of them did different methods to improve the economy in Canada R.B. Bennet had a better response to the Great Depression than Mackenzie King.

R.B. Bennett was the Prime Minister as the conservation party’s leader to serve for Canadians in Canada during the Great depression from 1930 to 1935. He was a compassionate，decisive, generous and determined person with a sense of mission, and did his best for Canadian citizens. He believed government has the responsibility to recover the depression and solve the social problems what led by the depression in order to help the economy back on track. He was a wise and full of stratagems person with the long-term perspective, he determined his belief. Then, he started to take actions and kept trying to solve each problem through different ways. The first action which was agile and decisive, raising tariff by 50% on the foreign goods to protect the Canadian producers and also keep Canada independent of the US. Although it wasn’t a perfect actions，it had some defect， but It was working on the way he expected and created the market for the Canadian producers directly and effectively. Second, he introduced the Unemployment Relief Act, and gave $20millionto people as relieves. Although it didn’t stimulate the economy. it did help people to survive in the bad time， in spite of it didn’t stimulate the economy.

Unfortunately, the Great Depression was not mitigated by the two actions he already took. Then, people started to angry and abuse Bennet. However, Bennet didn’t defeat by the injustice and vituperation, he determined to find new and better ways to solve problems instead. He kept hardworking to introduced new act, Farm Relief Acts, as his third efforts for Canadian. He ensured the minimum sale price of wheat to protect the farmers’ and the farming of Canada’s benefits from inflation. Fourth, Work camps, he created the jobs for men in the camp, that can induce the number of people who dependent upon the directly relief and encourage people to go to work to earn few money to survive in 1932. It did work successfully for a period of time, less and less people were unemployed or dependent upon on the pogey. There were a lot men went to work on there through the living conditions in there is poor. Fifth, he created the Bank of Canada which learnt by the way that England used to help its own depression. He was good at learning the advantages from other countries and employed them in Canada very well. The Bank of Canada Act was his biggest achievement, it helped to relieve the biggest issues, unemployment, and it keeps working and benefiting the economy until today.

Sixth, he arrested the trekkers as his way to deal with the problems, ‘On to Ottawa Trek” in Ottawa. Many people were indignant about that results, and others sympathized with trekkers. Although the measure the Bennet took was a bit extreme. But for another hand and standing on a perspective which was longer-term, it was insurance that he protected the citizens from those extremist, reduced the damage to a minimum, and avoided the occurring of bigger riots. Seventh, he started to negotiate a trade treaty with the United States to find a partner to recover the Depression together. Finally, He tried to introduce his ‘New Deal’, which learnt by the American President Franklin Roosevelt to achieve social and economic reform, to the Canadian in 1935. It’s a new idea and would be great if he would continue to be the Prime Minister. But people were disappointed because the depression was continued after the he strived. Bennet was voted out of the government in the next election in 1935. He left the stage depressed. He was really successful as Prime Minster and played effective measures to combat the Great Depression.

Mackenzie King was another Prime Minister during the Great Depression, he came back to the position of the Prime Minister in 1935 after he left there in 1929. He was the leader of the liberal party, who believed that the economy will improve by its own and the money should be saved for the times of the economic prosperity, not spend on the social program. He was also a great Prime Minister who did some effort to try to recover the Great Depression with optimism. But he was a bit cold, Narrow-minded indifferent，and thoughtless. The first measure he did during the Great Depression was a mistake. Because he believed the Great Depression would recover by itself as time flowed, and government don’t need to deal with it. He led to an uncharacteristic slip in a debate on unemployment on 1930 what led people to be caught by surprise, and almost everything was on crash because he didn’t prepare any measures. Second, he didn’t treat the regions where didn’t support his party very well as other regions. He even said that “I would not give them a five-cent piece”. Both of his mistakes caused him step down directly in 1930.

He went to Washington to negotiate and sign the final trade treaty with the US, which Bennet didn’t complete after he was voted back into office in 1935. It’s his biggest valuable contribution as his third measure to combat the Great Depression. It credited by him although Bennet was the person to started. It helped the economy to grow a bit directly and benefited Canadian as soon as possible. And it gave the American market to Canadian farm products, which as known as the important part of Canada economy at the same time. Fourth, he increased federal grant money to provinces to help the provincial government keep servicing and relieving the people, but it was just lasting for one year. Fifth, the National Employment Commission was created by him in 1936 to investigate the state of unemployment in Canada. It’s a wise action he took, it led him know the correct state of affairs of the Canadian citizens. But he just accomplished few things of what he should to do from the good suggestion, such as, spending only few money on the job creations and training programs.

Finally, he set up another Royal Commission to examine the issue of federal- provincial relations in 1937. The commission didn’t give good recommendations to him at that time, but he would start to achieve the suggestion what would lead to many contradictions and controversies occur unexpectedly. Fortunately，the economy started to growing better and better, so suggestions were not implement. His ideas，which to set up commission to investigate the situation of the problems were great, but he didn’t listen to the good suggestions or do the valuable things to solve the problems. He did less beneficial things to combat Great Depression.

Bennet and Mackenzie King, both of them did achievement for Canadian during the Great depression in Canada. They were a bit similar that they spend money on the programs which to relieve people’s life and promote economic growth. But there were much differences between them, and Bennet was much better than him obviously.

On one hand， Bennet did much more beneficial things than Mackenzie King did. Bennet introduced new ideas, created the acts, and tried a lot of way to combat Great Depression to lead people and the economy back on track and prosperity phase. Unemployment Relief Act, Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act, raising tariffs, Work Camps and the Bank of the Canada all created by him, all of them were effective methods. He did try his best for the Canada at that time. These methods benefited and relieved the Canadian citizens’ lives, some are benefiting Canadian until today even. There was very few method ended working after it born for one years or longer. As the contrast, Mackenzie King just did one valuable thing which continues working until today. He completed the Trade Agreement with US, which actually can’t mark as his own achievement because Bennet was the person who started the treaty. And he did another thing correct additionally, he created the commissions to help him to investigate the actual situation of the problem, and to how it influenced the people and other stuff. But he didn’t give the people much helps as they needed although he knew the actual situations and got the suggestion by the groups.

On the other hand, Bennet was more generous and concerned about citizens than Mackenzie King. Bennet was not only lead the government to spend mountains of money to help people and economy of the country, but also gave his private money to the people who asked for help to him though writing letter or other ways. Although he didn’t give his private money to all the poor people, and the money was not a lot for per person. But he already did his best to help people, and his actions were sincere and touching. He was a generous and merciful person. In contrast, the Mackenzie King was not only stingy to spend money as less as possible for people to help them overcome difficulty, but also discriminated the provinces where didn’t support his party that he “wouldn’t give them a five-cent piece.” He was really an irresponsible person with the narrow heart.

In conclusion，Bennet, as leader of the conservation party and the Prime Minister , had a more effective response to the Great Depression than Mackenzie King and his liberal party. Although both of the Prime Minsters did efforts to combat the Great Depression, Bennet had the better strategy and he was much more generous, determined, successful and cared more about people than Mackenzie King. Bennet’s policies, such as Unemployment Relief Act, Farm Relief Acts and Bank of Canada. They were combatting to the economy and living conditions for people better than Mackenzie King’s measures.