

I refuse *in toto* to be held responsible for the statements made by the different reporters in the various newspapers, because my hon. friend might say that it is stated that I had entered into an arrangement and a bargain with Sir Charles Tupper as to my future course and my future action, and what might follow as the result of the reconstruction which has taken place. I take this opportunity to say that that is equally unfounded, and has not a scintilla of truth in it, and I am quite sure that Sir Charles Tupper, if he is applied to, will acquit me of having made stipulations in any way, directly or indirectly. I take this opportunity to give a flat denial to that. I decline, however, to enter into a controversy on the subject, or to explain what took place between Sir Charles Tupper and myself, or between any other gentleman during the negotiations. I have simply to say that portions of that statement which my hon. friend the leader of the Opposition has read, are not correct. There are other portions of it that may be correct, but deductions are very often drawn from conversations that are not only irrelevant, but far from the truth.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—In the formation of governments it has been usual for Parliament to receive the fullest statement of the progress that has been made in the negotiations, and the important part of those really was whether the Premier, when Sir Charles Tupper was invited to become a member of the government, stipulated that the three gentlemen I have named should also be taken back into the government. It is a very simple question. Of course, if the hon. gentleman is not disposed to answer it directly, we must accept that.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—For the information of the hon. gentleman, I will tell him that when we came to an arrangement as to what should be done, no stipulation of any kind was made; nor before such negotiations were begun.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—The statement the hon. gentleman has just made to us will be received with a good deal of interest by the people of Canada, and they will be disposed I think to compare it with the statement delivered last week, and will be somewhat surprised that the whole point of controversy

between himself and the gentlemen who formed the Cabinet ten days ago was on the necessity of filling up the vacancy in the representation from the province of Quebec. He gave us his own parliamentary experience, and I think all of us could add our own experience, that it has never been a very serious matter for a vacant portfolio to remain unfilled for a considerable time. The hon. gentleman gave us several illustrations of it; the history of Canada is full of them, and therefore I doubt whether the people of Canada will be disposed to receive that statement as the true one. The statement made elsewhere intimated that the dissentient gentlemen had their misgivings from the beginning, that from the very first they doubted the ability of the hon. leader of the government to control his Cabinet. They say:

We have nevertheless unitedly and loyally striven to the best of our ability to make it strong and efficient, and it has been with growing regret that we have seen our efforts in a measure of success less than that for which we had hoped and striven.

Now that does not convey the idea that it is upon this single point, the vacancy caused by the retirement of the Hon. Mr. Angers, but that other circumstances, to which I do not propose now to advert, caused the breach between the leader of the government and his Cabinet. The hon. gentleman must have felt gratified during the past ten days at the outspoken sympathy, not only from his own party, but from gentlemen of all shades of politics, and the general feeling that he had not been fairly used by the dissident members of this government. That seemed to be the opinion of the hon. gentleman himself, in the explanations that he has given us from time to time during the past week, and therefore I think the explanation furnished to-day will be considered inconsistent with the speeches delivered on former occasions. However, that is entirely a matter for the party within themselves to settle, and I have no further comment to make upon the subject.

Hon. Mr. DRUMMOND—I think this House will accept with considerable surprise the proposition laid down by the hon. leader of the opposition that Parliament has a right to know whether any of the thousands of articles and rumours which appear in the public press are true or not. If the hon. gentleman claims that it is the right and