

is. Does the hon. gentleman want that before the next season goes by, a construction should be put on that treaty by the Minister of Fisheries diametrically opposite to that which Mr. Bayard puts on it? Does he want us brought to the point of the bayonet, to which he says the administration of the Fisheries Department brought us two years ago? Does he want us brought to that condition of affairs which Mr. Bayard describes in that private and confidential letter he wrote to the hon. gentleman? I trust not; and if he does not, we can only bring about a better and more cordial state of affairs by dealing honorably and frankly with each other, and, if we have entered into a treaty, by understanding what the real meaning of the treaty is. If we have made concessions, in heaven's name let us understand the full meaning of them; and if hon. gentlemen are going to vote, let them know what they are voting for. I will not submit to be lectured by the hon. gentleman in the tone and manner which he has assumed to-day, when I ask what construction is put upon that treaty by himself and the other plenipotentiaries. I was within my right, and instead of being lectured by the hon. gentleman, I was entitled to a fair and decent answer, which I have not got.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I want to know whether this whole business is a farce or not. If we are not to consider and discuss every line of this treaty, what is the use of putting you in the Chair? We have a right to know what we are doing. We do not approve of this treaty; we do not pretend to say that it is a good treaty or honorable to Canada. We accept it under compulsion, but we have a right to know what we are accepting, and that we propose to know.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. The hon. gentleman had an opportunity of giving this treaty a most careful and deliberate examination; and with all its obscurity and defects, with all its want of clearness of construction or explicitness of statement, he knew that this House could not alter one jot or tittle of it. The hon. gentleman who has just taken his seat will not pretend for a single moment that, in discussing this treaty, the House is in the position that it would be in if we had before us a Bill on any subject over which the House has perfect control. When we have a Bill before us in which we can alter clauses, hon. gentlemen may contend in the most vigorous terms for the construction of the law or the meaning of a phrase, because it is in the power of the House to alter the Bill upon such representations. But the hon. gentleman knows that that is not our position here. The treaty is made.

Mr. MACKENZIE. There is an alternative.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. What is that alternative?

Mr. MACKENZIE. To reject it.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. That is precisely the position. That alternative was preserved to this House, so that not one line of this treaty can become operative or can affect the interests of Canada until the Parliament of Canada, having deliberately considered it in all its bearings, decides to accept and ratify it. But that is not the position of the hon. gentleman who has spoken. He would have been within the lines of his duty as an independent member of this House if, coming to the conclusion that this treaty was faulty, obscure, or that for any other cause it was undesirable that it should become binding on Canada, he had determined to give it the most unqualified hostility, and defeat it if he could; and even if he stood alone as a member of this House in taking that view, he was bound in the interests of Canada to vote for its rejection. But that was his only alternative, as it is not in our power to alter a line of the treaty or change it in any way. But what did the hon. gentleman do? After giving the treaty the most care-

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.)

ful consideration that he was bound as member of this House to give it, he said:

"The treaty has been agreed upon, and I for one hope that no action will be taken by this Parliament to throw it out. I am willing, Sir, that it should be accepted."

The hon. gentleman having taken that position, having come to the conclusion that he owed it to his constituents and to Canada that this treaty should become a binding treaty, I say that when he stands up here and takes half an hour of the time of this House in order to give the weight of his opinion as a lawyer in favor of the interests of the United States and United States fishermen, I say he is not fulfilling his duty to Canada or the fishermen of Canada. He asks, is it not desirable that we should know what the treaty means. When I submitted the treaty to the House, I explained as fully as I was able, the bearing and operation of each clause. I am not a lawyer, but I do not believe there is any such obscurity in it, or any such doubt can be raised, and as the hon. gentleman alleges. Does he not think that if this treaty is to become law, he had better leave it to United States lawyers, to fight for the interests of United States fishermen, to take the ground he has taken this afternoon? And does he not think he had better reserve his great legal powers to fight for the interests of Canadian fishermen against those pretensions on the part of the fishermen of the United States? I am not disposed to lecture the hon. gentleman, I should be doing very wrongly if I were to attempt it; but he must allow me to say, not with a view to lecturing him, but in order if I can to stop a course which I deem more mischievous to the interests of Canada and Canadian fishermen than any course the hon. gentleman could take. It was with that view that I drew the hon. gentleman's attention to the fact that he was not making a treaty, and was not in a position to alter a line of it, and, that being so, he was not acting fairly in the interest of Canada in taking a line which the most extreme advocates opposed to Canadian fishermen would take. That was the reason I drew the attention of the House to the unwisdom and the unfairness, in regard to the rights and interests of our own people, of the hon. gentleman expressing opinions on the floor of this Parliament, which might be quoted in the courts, and used by those endeavoring to get advantages over our fishermen under this treaty. I confess I could not understand how an hon. gentleman who professed to be, and I have no doubt is, anxious to promote the interests of Canadian fishermen, could express such opinions and leave them to be quoted by parties at another time, and in another place, against our country and against the interests of our fishermen. Now, I say that if the hon. gentleman holds the opinion he has stated to-day, if the hon. gentlemen around him hold these opinions, they have not discharged their duty in supporting this treaty. I have no hesitation in saying that. I am very thankful to hon. gentlemen opposite for the manner in which they have dealt with this subject. I felt I was justified in saying, when I submitted this treaty to the House, that it was not a question of party, and I felt no little pride and gratification in finding that, to a large extent, hon. gentlemen opposite seemed to recognise that fact to the fullest extent, and to feel that, under existing circumstances, they would be justified in giving this treaty their support. But I do trust that that support will not be affected by statements, made with the weight and authority which their position in Parliament give hon. gentlemen, which may be used to our disadvantage in any other place. Perhaps it is because I am not a lawyer that I am not able to draw these fine distinctions that gentlemen of the legal profession can draw on almost every question and every law, however plain and clear, that may be submitted to them for approval; and perhaps for that reason, I think this is a plain, clear