

dodging, a process that he has been carrying on for months in this country? Is there an hon. gentleman in this House who even has a suspicion that the Liberal platform of 1919 will ever be put into effect if the Liberals are returned to power? Did the hon. member for Shelburne and Queen's (Mr. Fielding) give any reason for that hope in the speech he made to elect Mr. Gordon in Peterborough? The burden of his speech was just this: I am not quoting the Liberal platform, he told them; I have not a word to say about it; but you remember what was done in 1896—and we will just do the same old thing again. They would do the same thing again as was done in 1896 by the party whose leader declared in Western Canada that his principles were identical with those of hon. gentlemen behind the hon. member for Red Deer.

Now, will my hon. friends angularly opposite but draw the lesson from that? I have never disputed the honesty of the mind of my hon. friend from Red Deer—never disputed it for a moment. On this tariff issue would he prefer to support a party whose position he knows and knows to be consistently maintained, or would he rather support another party whose position he does not know from one week to another, and who, he in his heart believes would put into effect the principles and policies of this Government on the tariff if he were returned to power? I ask him to say, in allegiance to his conscience, which of the two he would rather support. Does he think that in the state of confusion that now prevails throughout this country, where the issue is evaded and avoided and dodged at every opportunity—as it is going to be dodged, if I mistake not, even in this debate—does he think that in these circumstances there is any possibility of a declaration on this issue on the part of the people of Canada?

We are not proposing any departure from the historic policy of this country pursued under this Government, under the late Government, under the Government of which the leader of the Opposition was himself a member. We are not proposing any departure. If we were we would not have the support of the Minister of Immigration and Colonization (Hon. Mr. Calder)—the one man who, as between himself and the Leader of the Opposition and the members who sit around him, has been consistent on this tariff issue. He is standing where he stood when the Liberal Party were in power on the tariff issue; he is standing just where the member for

[Mr. Meighen.]

Shelburne and Queen's (Mr. Fielding) intends to stand and said in Peterborough he would stand if the Liberal party got into power. The difference between him and them is this, that in the meantime he is not pretending to stand somewhere else whenever it suits a constituency so to pretend; that in the meantime he is not seeking an alliance with men whose principles are diametrically opposite, by camouflaging his own. That is the difference between the Minister of Immigration and hon. gentlemen opposite.

Right now, they have an opportunity to show the people just where they stand on this issue. Are they ready to abide by the platform of 1919? If they are, let this session not go by, let this debate not go by, until hon. gentlemen stand up squarely to the Speech from the Throne and tell the people of Canada that that is so. For such can be the only issue if a dissolution of this Parliament takes place.

My hon. friend tells us that we are usurpers, and all the rest of it, because we are holding power. Do you know what he has started already in Western Canada? Do you know the tactics pursued by his press—and a most subservient press it is? Why, they are declaring in those provinces to-day that if Parliament is dissolved at this time it is a "sharp trick" on the part of the Prime Minister. Does my hon. friend know that? If this House is dissolved, they say, at this time, before the western people are placed in a position by a redistribution bill to have their voice in the policies of this country; if we take the step of dissolving Parliament, it will be a sharp trick on the part of the Prime Minister. This is what the press of the West says, a press supporting my hon. friend. Well if they say that before we dissolve, what do you think they are going to say after we do? Do you think "sharp trick" would at all compare with the language they would use then? Why, from one end of the country to the other there would be a roar of protest from the Liberal press—in which the Leader of the Opposition would join, I have no doubt—on the ground that we had robbed the electorate of that country of their due voice in Parliament; that we had stifled it for five years merely to catch a chance verdict of the people. Let the leader of the Opposition look at the columns of the Calgary Albertan, a paper that supports him to the hilt—and let him see there a challenge to me to dissolve Parliament and deny the West their rights. I invite