

Mr. ELLIOTT: —I would ask him why, when he was about to become a real minister, he did take an oath of office if such is not required? Will my hon. friend tell me?

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: I did not say that.

Mr. ELLIOTT: That is all very well.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: My hon. friend says "all very well." What I said was there was no such statute. My hon. friend has referred to an oath which he says is required by statute, and there is no such statute; that is all. My hon. friend might get a little closer to the facts sometimes.

Mr. ELLIOTT: My hon. friend knows perfectly well that he is—

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: Absolutely right.

Mr. ELLIOTT: No, he knows that he is not right. If he is right then I would ask him why do the members of the cabinet take the oath? Why does the Minister of Justice suggest—and he stated what the Minister of Finance now denies—that if he were a real minister, that is a live minister—a minister into whose being had been infused the breath of life—he would have to take an oath of office? Being only an imaginary, spurious, unreal, visionary minister, how could he come here and seek to get control of the money of the people of this country without taking any oath of office? I do not want to labour the point. I am sure that my hon. friends realize by now that they have no existence as an administration, that they are absolutely without the powers which are necessary in order to entitle them to exercise the functions of government, to entitle them to receive supply, and to carry on the business of the country.

I want just at this stage to deal with another phase of the argument that has been presented to you, Mr. Speaker, during the course of this debate. In doing so I hope that I shall keep away from matters that are personal and endeavour to argue the question out on its real merits. Because, after all, Mr. Speaker, this is a serious question. What the people of Canada are concerned with today are not recriminations back and forth from one member of this House to another, but the very serious problem of how the affairs of the country are to be administered, how their money is to be expended, and the status of those by whom that expenditure is to be made. That is a serious question and it should be argued seriously. It is not enough,

I submit, for some hon. gentlemen opposite to say: "You are taking up a lot of time, you are taking it up at the close of the session when we should be at home." I agree that we should be home, we should have been home months ago, but why are we not there? We are not at home because my hon. friends opposite spent weeks, yes months, in the attempt to convince the members of this House that a government could not function if it had a prime minister who was not a member of either House of parliament. My hon. friends did not argue that the late government had ministers not entitled to carry on the administration but they argued that the fact that the late government did not have a qualified prime minister was an absolute bar to its constitutional functioning. It is not sufficient for hon. gentlemen to say that we should not take up a few hours, or a few days, for that matter, in discussing a question of this kind. It is not sufficient for them to say to us: "You are doing this just to get into power." Is that why my hon. friends opposite occupied all the early months of the session in useless discussion which did not get them anywhere or assist the members of this House in the solution of the problems which confront this country?

I think that my hon. friend (Sir Henry Drayton), who at times is reasonable, will, when he comes to consider the situation, realize that he and the other members of the visionary cabinet neglected to follow the constitutional procedure which would enable them to carry on for a short time. The matter is too serious to be treated in that way. Are the representatives in this House of the people of Canada going to submit to this proposition; that the affairs of this country shall be conducted in this way, that the moneys of this country shall be expended by a government clothed with less authority than any government that has ever assumed control of a self-governing country among any of the British dominions? I submit not.

Mr. PRICE: Clothed with less authority than the government my hon. friend has been supporting? Why, the idea!

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order, order.

Mr. PRICE: The public was fed up with that government.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order, order.

Mr. ELLIOTT: Really, Mr. Speaker, it amuses me when my hon. friend even suggests that he has an idea. It is quite new. I do not propose to get into any cheap argument