

sition are not prepared to abide by the consequences of their action—and I do not think they are—their object cannot be altogether to defeat the Government. When I saw this resolution brought up at this stage, it occurred to me that its main object was not to defeat the Government, but to place members from the western provinces on this side of the House in a false position. And if I had not thought that before this debate commenced, I would be quite sure of it now, because member after member on the other side has held out a threat to western members on this side of the House. What hon. gentlemen have said in that regard bears out the idea I had at first. Of course, it is quite open to my hon. friends to do whatever they see fit. I am not worrying about the false position; I am not worrying about my electors. I addressed only one meeting in my constituency before I was elected, and that meeting was attended by intelligent men who had been strong supporters of the different parties—good red-hot Grits and Tories, pretty equally divided. I explained to them as fully as I could what my position was and would be. I foresaw just the position that we are in to-day. I told them that it was quite possible that a resolution of this kind would be brought up in the principle of which I would concur, but that I reserved to myself the right to use my discretion if I felt that the Government in power should be sustained. I said: "If you are not prepared to send me to Parliament on those grounds, send some one else; I positively will not go as your representative otherwise." I say that those who attended this meeting had been strong party men, but not one of them raised the slightest objection; all approved of the position I took.

And I think the position of the western members generally is the same. I want to make it clear that I am thoroughly in sympathy with the principle laid down in the amendment, and were it a question of voting yea or nay on that without its having any other effect, I certainly would vote for it, but I cannot agree with my hon. friend from Victoria, Alberta (Mr. W. H. White), when he says that the position is the same now as it was when we introduced a resolution some two years ago, because my hon. friend must remember that at the time we introduced that resolution the Budget debate was over. I think my hon. friend knows that very well.

Mr. W. H. WHITE: Some hon. member near me, when the question was asked, stated that the Budget had not been brought down. I accepted that statement. I am not

altogether sure that such was the case. If the Budget had been brought down I apologize to the hon. member for Red Deer.

Mr. LEVI THOMSON: I am not accusing, and I do not wish to accuse my hon. friend of purposely wishing to mislead the House, but I am quite sure that is the position. My hon. friend (Mr. Richardson) has just placed in my hand a note to the effect that the Budget was introduced on April 24 and the resolution was moved by Mr. Oliver on May 29. The position would, therefore, be different. But whether the position is different or not, I do not think that would bind us, under the present circumstances, to vote for this amendment. The circumstances are a little different, but I do not purpose going into them. I do not say that I might not, under certain circumstances, feel justified in voting for this amendment as it stands. It might be the simplest matter for a few of us who represent the most red-hot free trade constituencies in the West merely to sit back quietly, and when the vote was taken to vote for the amendment. That would not defeat the Government. But hon. members must remember this, that there are at least 30 members from the western provinces who are in practically the same position as I am. Would it not, then, be the meanest thing on earth if I did that sort of thing? What would my hon. friends opposite think if I acted in that way? In fair play to each other, under present circumstances, we have to stand together.

Mr. E. LAPOINTE: Does not my hon. friend know that during the debate on the Address, many speakers on the other side challenged us to show where we stood on the tariff question, and no one asked us to wait until the Budget was brought down?

Mr. LEVI THOMSON: That may be. It is not necessary to deny or admit that. People may make challenges to my hon. friend which they have no business to make; but it is not necessary for him to fall into every trap laid for him, is it? I am afraid my hon. friend is rather hard pushed for an excuse—and finds a rather poor one—for the position which he occupies at present. He will have to endeavour to secure some better reason for the action of his party than that. I do not purpose complaining about the action of the Liberal party when in power. At least I do not wish to complain any further than I complained of their action when I was on the opposite side of the House. I do not wish to adopt towards the action of the Liberal