

But I made a mistake; it was accepted by the whole House and hon. gentlemen who voted for my resolution are as much responsible for it as myself. Not only was my proposition considered, but it was weighed by the hon. member for Bruce South (Hon. Mr. Blake). So much did the hon. member for Bruce South consider it as a matter of certainty that the Committee must sit during the recess that he used this language:—"With regard to giving the Committee power to sit after the prorogation he thought the correct course to pursue would be to introduce a Bill authorizing the committee to sit during the recess, and by a resolution of the House to take evidence under oath."

The hon. gentlemen saw that it was quite impossible for us to get through the investigation during the session, and I do not see in justice how it was possible to get through without these gentlemen coming. Have I not then proved my case, Mr. Speaker? (*Cheers.*) Have I not proved that this House solemnly resolved, as far as it could resolve, that this inquiry should be continued after the prorogation?

Now, Mr. Speaker, I shall not elaborate this question any further than to say that believing as I did, believing as I do, that it would have been an injustice to proceed with this inquiry in the absence of the gentlemen whom I have named, the Government of which I am a member, offered the advice to the Governor General that the House should be prorogued on the 13th of August, it having been understood that in the intermediate time the Committee might sit. That advice was accepted, that was the advice I brought down and communicated to the House, and that advice was acted upon by this House, and that act this House cannot now re-call. (*Hear, hear.*) This House is responsible for its own acts, and ordinances, and when I announced here that the House would be prorogued on the 13th of August, this House accepted that proposition as it should have done. (*Cheers.*)

But, Sir, I stated to this House for all the purposes of this House that the adjournment should be considered a prorogation. (*Cheers.*) That was accepted by this House, and more than that, I brought down a bill to pay every member his salary on the ground that it was a prorogation, and I say further that any members who got this money and wished for more and came back to get it was guilty of taking money under false pretences. (*Cheers.*)

We know what has happened in the United States. We know that the *Globe* in order to induce its friends to come—they knew of course that my friends from the Pacific did not care for a thousand dollars, but they thought that the hon. members who were nearer Ottawa would be induced to come by a bribe, and the *Globe* to the eternal disgrace of that paper; insinuated that if hon. members came they would get their money. (*Cheers.*) And what would we have seen had this happened!

We would have seen in this country a repetition of the salary grab which is ruining so many men in the United States at this moment. The Congress of the United States passed a bill increasing the salaries of its members and providing that the members should get

their increased salaries, and for a time considerably anterior to that session; and what is the consequence? It has roused the people of the United States from one end to the other who were not easily roused by things of this kind, but it was such an evident grab by men to get money and put it in their pockets that it has sounded the death knell of many of them. The same would have been the certain fate of any man in Canada who had taken his money under these circumstances. (*Cheers.*)

I shall now make a few remarks in respect to the issue of the Royal Commission. I have spoken of the prorogation. I believe that it was constitutional. I believe that it was wise, and whether it was wise or unwise, it was sanctioned by this Parliament, and I know that Parliament cannot, without dishonour, reverse their vote; and I believe I know that the House accepted that prorogation on the ground that the adjournment was in effect to be a prorogation, and that only the two Speakers should be in the House on the 13th of August. (*Cheers.*)

As regards the legality of the Royal Commission, I believe that I need not speak so long on that subject. The motion of the hon. member for Lambton relieves me from that necessity. I will quote the evidence of the Royal Commission.

Hon. Mr. BLAKE: Hear, hear.

Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD: I hear the member for Bruce South say "hear, hear." Surely he ought not to touch, taste nor handle the unclean thing. (*Laughter.*) Surely he will not think that any good fruit will come from a vile stalk. Surely he won't quote any evidence of the Commission if he believes the evidence of that Commission to be illegal. The hon. gentleman is on the horns of a dilemma. Either the evidence is legal or illegal. If it is legal, then the House can judge from the evidence, but if it is illegal, the House must discard it; and yet the hon. member for Lambton quoted this evidence, and every man who spoke on the opposite side of the House used that evidence; and it cannot be said, if that evidence is to be used against the Government, that it is illegal or unconstitutional. (*Cheers.*) You have your money, and you take your choice. Either accept or discard it, and remain as you were before this evidence was taken. (*Cheers.*)

Now it was alleged in the argument of an hon. gentleman opposite, with respect to this Committee, that the Governor General had been snubbed. I tell the hon. gentleman, and I have the permission of the Crown to state it, that in addition to the official announcement, there is a formal opinion given by the law officers of the Crown,—those authorities whose opinion the hon. member for Bothwell looked so scornfully upon, but every one else so much respected—that the course taken by the Governor General both in respect to the prorogation and the issuance of the Royal Commission, was legal and constitutional.

Hon. Mr. BLAKE: Hear, hear.

Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD: Well, Mr. Speaker I cannot help it if the hon. gentleman does not agree with the law officers of