

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I am making the broad statement that at no time did I ever bargain for the support of any group in this house. I wish to make clear one incident which, while it is not capable of being so construed, I think ought to be known. At that time the house had before it a motion in the nature of a motion of censure. The government was contemplating moving an amendment to the effect that a royal commission, representative of all parties in the house, should be appointed to inquire into all customs matters in question.

Mr. BURY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I submit that the matter into which the right hon. gentleman is now going is utterly out of order. He was speaking on a matter that arose out of the debate on the repeal of section 98, and that is the only matter in connection with which he has a right to address the house. He is now attempting to wander to a subject which has not the remotest connection with this debate.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I understand that the right hon. the leader of the opposition intends to make only a brief statement. As far as I am concerned, I think the point of order is well taken; we should not wander away from the bill now before the house. If the statement of the leader of the opposition is only a short one, I shall not stop him.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: My statement is simply this: At that time I ascertained that an amendment of the kind would be acceptable to the Progressive party and that they would support it if it were brought into this house. For that reason members of the government of the day had cause to believe that if they desired to retain power, power was theirs by virtue of the fact that the amendment would have been accepted by this house and the original motion of censure would not have carried. My reason for making that point quite clear is this: That was not seeking to gain support of any group in the house for the sake of maintaining power, because, as a matter of fact, the government, though it had the knowledge that an amendment for a royal commission would carry, did not wait for the motion to be further considered or for the amendment to be proposed and passed; its request for a dissolution was made, and its advice in that particular not having been accepted its resignation was tendered prior to further consideration of the motion, for the simple reason that the government felt that with the parties balanced as they were, and an imperial conference scheduled for later in the fall, it was much better that a new house

should be returned in the interval in order that whatever government might be in power it would be in a position to carry on the work of parliament in a satisfactory manner and represent Canada with authority at the conference.

May I again say to the Solicitor General that I deny there was any effort to secure the support of any individual or group in any way by the promise of any legislation. There was nothing that at any time could be construed as a price at which support was obtained by the previous Liberal administration in its eight and a half years of office. In view of that statement, I ask him to withdraw the statement he made that the legislation to which he has referred was a price paid for political support.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do I understand that the leader of the opposition is rising to a point of order or a question of privilege? The Solicitor General has already spoken on this question and may not speak again unless the leader of the opposition raises a point of order or question of privilege.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I have no desire to do other than permit the hon. member to put himself right in the eyes of his fellow members, if he so wishes.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: According to the rules of the house he may not speak again.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: If the house will agree, he may speak again. I am sure we on this side are prepared to allow him to do so.

Mr. DUPRE: I am quite willing to answer if I have the right to do so.

Mr. GUTHRIE: There is another point of order. Any comments that were made by the Solicitor General in regard to statements or actions or letters of my right hon. friend were made in regard to one who was not a member of the house at the time and I think such comments were quite open to the Solicitor General.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: As a matter of privilege may I say that the Solicitor General, in the course of a debate that took place in the House of Commons two nights ago, made the statement that my colleague the hon. member for Quebec East (Mr. Lapointe) and I as leader of the Liberal Party had sought to obtain the support of certain Labour members at a price, the price being the introduction of legislation repealing section 98 of the criminal code. The Solicitor General went further—

Mr. BURY: I rise to a point of order.