

the country had passed through one only two months previously. Sir John A. Macdonald still had a majority in the House, and His Excellency had to make up his mind whether he should give a dissolution to Brown and Dorion or recall Macdonald. He recalled Macdonald, put him back into the seats of office, and Macdonald carried on. That is the last occasion in this country of which there is any record of His Excellency using his so-called discretionary prerogative.

On the present occasion we must ask ourselves this question: Did the right hon. leader of the shadow government advise His Excellency that he had sufficient strength in this House to carry on? I have stated definitely that if he did that, he ill-advised His Excellency, and for this reason: The group which now has asserted the right to govern knows just as definitely as the group which has just resigned that it cannot carry on in this House by virtue of its own numerical strength without entering into some co-operative understanding with the group to which I have the honour to belong. I stated yesterday and I state now again, that to my personal knowledge no such co-operative understanding has been reached. The leader of the shadow government never at any time since the resignation of the late ministry invited or called upon the group to which I belong for co-operation as a group. If there have been any negotiations with any individuals I know naught of it. If the acting leader of the government has the greatest numerical strength in this House, made up of his own party and any individuals in this corner of the House, it is his duty to inform the House of that fact now.

Mr. McGIBBON: May I ask the hon. member a question?

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): With pleasure.

Mr. McGIBBON: Has not the House already informed him by two different votes?

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): Informed him of what?

Mr. McGIBBON: That he has the majority?

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): That is rather an absurd question.

Mr. McGIBBON: If the hon. member cannot read anything from the last votes I am entirely sorry for him.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): I think I can read. I certainly think I can read as well as the hon. gentleman and perhaps reason

[Mr. E. J. Garland.]

a little better. The late votes did not give a majority in this House. The late votes were a censure on the administration of the Customs department and did not give hon. gentlemen opposite a majority. Nor could they get a majority unless they had entered into a co-operative understanding with the group to which I belong. If there is any understanding of that kind let them produce it. I know naught of it, nor have I access to any individual in my group who does know of it. Therefore I repeat that if the Right Hon. Arthur Meighen informed His Excellency that he was capable of carrying on, that he was capable of administering public affairs, he ill-advised and misinformed His Excellency.

An hon. MEMBER: Put him out of business.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): An hon. member says "put him out of business." On that point it is very interesting to know just what might happen if we did put him and his friends out of business. His Excellency has refused dissolution to the right hon. leader of the late government, presumably on the grounds of expediency—that is that the general interests of Canada will not be served by a general election at the present moment. For no other reason could His Excellency arrive at the decision he made, being fully cognizant of the strength of hon. gentlemen opposite and the general situation in this House. Under no other circumstances could he be justified, I imagine, in refusing dissolution on the one hand and on the other hand allowing hon. gentlemen opposite to come into office. Now an hon. gentleman opposite says "give us defeat." If we did defeat hon. gentlemen opposite then what would happen? Do hon. gentlemen opposite presume to imagine for one instant that His Excellency, already in an unconstitutional position, could still further make himself unconstitutional—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): —by granting them dissolution?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): Why the idea is repugnant to the whole nation.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member speaks of the effect of the advice that has been tendered to His Excellency. There is no point of order.