

nation at their cruelty and tried to stop it. Finally one fellow said, "Open the door and let him out; he will stop it himself." I have a feeling in my bones that when the Prime Minister of this country comes back into this House and the door is open, so to speak, when he is free to express himself from his proper seat in this chamber, he will be very well able to defend himself against any of the charges and assertions that have been made in respect of his advice to His Excellency or any other line of conduct taken by him of recent days.

I would like to remind the leader of the opposition of something that occurred not so many months ago, and which is still fresh in the memory of some of us at least. I do not know whether it is equally fresh in the memory of his followers or of himself, because sometimes it is convenient to have a memory which is not too retentive. The leader of the opposition played, as he supposed, and I have no doubt as his followers supposed, very effectively upon the enormity of the Prime Minister in having, as he said, misled His Excellency by wrong advice. I want to remind this House of what happened prior to and at the beginning of January last. Members of the House will remember that on the 8th of January the then Minister of Justice and the leader of the House (Mr. Lapointe) made a speech, which will be found on page 19 of Hansard, in which he stated the attitude of his leader, the Prime Minister, then without a seat, and these were the words he used:

The government met as soon as possible after the date of the election, and after having considered the situation as created by the result, the right hon. the leader of the government tendered his advice to His Excellency.

What was the advice? The speech continues:

—and in a statement which he issued and which appears in the Ottawa Journal of November 5, he said:

"After several interviews with His Excellency, at which the position brought about by the recent general election was fully discussed and all alternatives presented, I have taken the responsibility of advising His Excellency to summon parliament for the earliest practicable date in order to ascertain the attitude of the parliamentary representatives towards the very important question raised by the numerical position of the respective political parties."

That was the advice tendered by the then Prime Minister to His Excellency as to what steps should be taken. The notice published in the Ottawa Journal of November 5th proceeds:

His Excellency has been pleased to accept this advice.

Surely the words of that statement drafted by the then Prime Minister, and published

as an official declaration of what advice he had given to His Excellency are plain enough. As I took the liberty of reminding the House some months ago, in connection with the debate on the Address, that advice was, in the language of the then Prime Minister himself, that the House should be summoned and that it should be asked at once which party, whether that led by the then Prime Minister or that led by the leader of the opposition, was in the opinion of the House as a whole best fitted to take charge of the government of this country. That advice His Excellency adopted.

On the same day and in the same speech the then Minister of Justice and leader of the House went on to say:

We were justified in retaining office and summoning parliament,—and in asking for the decision of this parliament as to who should be its executive.

I submit that the meaning is clear, the language is plain enough: "We were justified in retaining office and summoning parliament "for the purpose of" asking for the decision of this parliament as to who should be its executive."

Again the then Solicitor General (Mr. Cannon) on the 11th of February in the same debate made a statement along the same line. He said:

The question before us is a very simple one. It is whether this government had the right, first of all, to meet parliament, and secondly, whether the government was justified in asking the members of the House of Commons to decide as to whether this government should remain in power or as to whether another administration should be formed.

Later in the same speech we are told that the Prime Minister had to advise His Excellency. On what point? There was only one point upon which His Excellency was to be advised by the then Prime Minister, and that was the point as to who was to be the leader of the government, who was to be the first minister of the crown, who was to be the adviser of His Excellency. The then Solicitor General said:

Now the Prime Minister had to face a novel situation as I have tried to prove, and not only a novel situation, but a difficult situation. A man with ordinary conceit might have thought he had enough experience, enough judgment, enough personal perspicacity to advise His Excellency, but the Prime Minister took another stand. He said, "It does not belong to one man in Canada, no matter how exalted his position may be, to decide a situation so novel and so difficult. I will have the greatest, the highest and the most competent tribunal of the land to decide it, and instead of giving my own personal opinion I shall ask the two hundred and forty-five representatives of the people to make the decision".

Then speaking in this House this very afternoon one of the hon. members—I do not