

and call his following what it is—"Tory"; a Tory administration of the old type. May I suggest to my right hon. friend that when he is criticising others in the language they use he should be a little more careful. If there is one gentleman more than another in this country who is apt to use extreme and at times offensive phrases, it is my right hon. friend.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the negotiations which preceded the formation of the Government, that I have nothing to conceal; indeed, I am only too happy to have opportunity to repeat on the floor of the House what I have already said publicly. I do not know that there is any obligation upon the leader of a Government to explain any of the negotiations relating to the formation of a ministry; on the other hand, I am quite willing, if only to satisfy the curiosity of my right hon. friend, to give him the fullest and most candid account.

When I was called upon to take the responsible step of forming a government, I naturally, Mr. Speaker, looked over the situation as it presented itself as a result of the elections. I saw that in three of the western provinces the representation in this Parliament was for the most part Progressive, with two or three exceptions it was exclusively such. During the campaign I heard, and I read also in a number of papers, declarations made by candidates to the effect that as Progressives they were really Liberals; that their point of view was a Liberal point of view. I was perfectly sincere when I said, and I repeat it here, that I believe many of the hon. members who belong to the Progressive Party regard themselves, if you like, as Progressive Liberals. May I say that in so far as the word "Progressive" indicates an attitude, my hon. friends of the Progressive party will find the present Government wholly in sympathy with them. The word "Liberal," to my mind, has always stood and will ever stand for progress. To the extent to which my Progressive friends use the word "Progressive" as indicating an attitude to be taken toward questions which come before Parliament for discussion; to the extent to which that word is synonymous with "Liberal," they will find this Government wholly in sympathy with them. So far as the word may have any meaning which relates it to class, there may be a difference between us; because Liberalism implies a point of view which embraces not merely one class but is broad enough to include representatives of

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

all classes who take a like attitude upon public questions. The fact which confronted me when I was forming the Government was the circumstance I have just mentioned, that in three of the provinces, the representation was almost exclusively Progressive representation. To my mind there can be nothing more unfortunate for this Dominion than that any part of it should have cause to feel that it is not to have its voice in the councils of the country. I feel that the whole purpose of Confederation itself would be menaced if any great body of opinion, any considerable section of this Dominion of Canada, should have reason to think that it was without due representation in the shaping of national policies and in the carrying on of our public affairs. I was anxious, therefore, that so far as the Government I was endeavoring to form was concerned, Western Canada would never be able to say that the Liberal Party adopted other than a generous attitude toward those who opposed some of its followers. So, Mr. Speaker, I made it known to gentlemen who, I believed, were representative of Progressive thought and opinion that I was prepared to consider taking into the Government members of the Progressive Party who enjoyed its confidence; but I made it quite plain that I would only consider that representation on the basis of its coming into a Liberal Administration. I was quite sincere when I said during the course of the campaign that I thought coalitions were a mistake. We have only to recall the Government of which my hon. friend was a member to realize how costly coalitions are, to realize how full of compromise and how inefficient they are. What the country needs most, and I believe British parliamentary practice has gone far to prove it, is an administration sufficiently of one mind and sufficiently strong to be able to adopt policies of great national importance and carry them through in a way that will help to make for good and strong government in the country. That was the position which I took in regard to our western friends in the formation of the Government. I take that position to-day and I will always take it as long as I have to do with the affairs of the government in this country. Any body of opinion in Canada which represents itself as Liberal will be entitled to a place in the councils of this country, but it must be for gentlemen themselves to say whether or not they wish to have their views regarded as Liberal, or as of some other point of view. All I wish to