

But the Minister of Marine took particular pains to explain that the reason which actuated the committee was wholly different; and the reason was that the committee took the view taken by the bench in Manitoba in the case of the Queen vs. Sanders.

These things make us somewhat suspicious. We find one minister telling us: the law is as you say; and then we have another minister, who happened to be out when his colleague spoke, coming in a few hours afterwards, and telling us that the law is exactly the opposite.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. I beg the hon. gentleman's pardon. I was present when the Minister of Marine made the statement referred to. Therefore any statement I make subsequently was made with the full knowledge of what my colleague had said. In the next place, I did not express this evening any opinion on the question as to whether the evidence was admissible or not.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. Then the hon. gentleman did not listen to the quotation I gave from his own speech. He can go a great distance, but he is not going to tell this House that the language I have just quoted does not show that the hon. minister's opinion was that the admission of such evidence was improper and illegal, and that the Committee on Privileges and Elections admitted it simply because of the row created by the opposition press. What condition of things have we come to when, in face of his own language, the minister can say that he never entertained that opinion.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. I have not said anything of the kind. I have said that I did not express—whether it was important for me to express an opinion or not is beside the question—an opinion this evening. The hon. gentleman has been endeavouring to put in my mouth an opinion which he says I expressed this evening upon the question of the admissibility of this evidence. I say that I have expressed no opinion on the admissibility of the evidence.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. The hon. gentleman cannot get away in that manner. He either heard or did not hear, and if he did not, I will read to him again the language he used on June 11, in this House, when he distinctly said that the evidence was improperly admitted. He distinctly says that the evidence should not have been admitted, that it was evidence improperly admitted and that it was admitted because of the force of public opinion.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. If the hon. gentleman (Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper) will allow me, I

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER.

am not saying that the statement of mine on June 11 that he read was not a correct statement of what I said. But, the hon. gentleman is referring to what I said the other day and professing to say what I said to-night. He said that I came in, and, not hearing the opinion expressed by the Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Sir Louis Davies) this afternoon, had expressed an opinion directly contrary to him. I expressed no opinion on that subject this afternoon; and if I had expressed any, it must have been when the matter came up a few days ago.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. That explanation I do not think very satisfactory. I take back at once and stand corrected in regard to the immaterial point as to whether the minister (Mr. Blair) was present or absent when his colleague expressed diametrically opposite opinions. But the question was as to the admissibility of this evidence; and it was on that that the opinion was expressed on June 11 by the minister.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. What was it?

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. What I have read.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. Was that an expression of my opinion on the question?

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. So far as the English language could convey an opinion. The hon. gentleman puts it very strongly. He could not have followed me, but I would refer him to his opinion as expressed in the language I have already read. We had the very opposite view expressed by the Minister of Marine and Fisheries this afternoon. Now, can there be a clearer reason for this House to set doubts at rest? There are two different views held by two eminent legal gentlemen in the cabinet; and we ask that the proceedings of that commission shall not be disturbed, but that we shall take the responsibility here and now of saying what the instructions shall be. If hon. gentlemen opposite wish to treat us fairly, let them as a party, let them as a government—because they are taking charge of this commission as a party and a government and not as a parliament—say that they do not wish the commission to have the right, clear and beyond doubt, to obtain from witnesses information as to how they voted, and let us decide on that. Let them be frank with us. If that is their view, let them express that view; but let us make clear the will of parliament on that important matter. There never was a case requiring to be decided more definitely than the case now under notice; and let us deal fairly with ourselves and with the commission, and remove what, at any rate, may be