

Mr. Curran, Solicitor General, therefore a member of the government, though not of the cabinet, supported also the motion. Sir Hector Langevin said :

Now, it is a well known fact that such motions are not necessarily votes of non-confidence. On the contrary, very often these amendments are carried by the House, and the government does not consider that they should resign, but proceed with supply as soon as the amendment is disposed of. I have seen that repeatedly, and I have even seen the late leader of the government, Sir John Macdonald, on several occasions, accept a motion of that kind, and have it carried in the House, showing that such a motion is not a vote of non-confidence.

Sir Adolphe Caron, Postmaster General, though opposing the motion, said :

I know myself of amendments which were moved on going into supply which certainly our late lamented leader, Sir John Macdonald accepted, or without accepting, did not consider as a direct vote of want of confidence. But I fail to recollect a single instance where Sir John Macdonald, when leading the House, would not consider an amendment to supply censuring a member of the government, as a direct attack against the government.

So much so, that before the vote was taken, Mr. Kenny explained to the House that, seeing a member of the cabinet, and another member of the government supporting the motion, he could no more think that it implied want of confidence, and he voted for the amendment.

I think, Sir, that my case is a far clearer one than that which I have just quoted. In the former case, the motion in amendment to the ministerial proposition to go into supply was, as stated by the Postmaster General, a direct vote of censure against one member of the government. It was, nevertheless, supported by two members and several friends of the government on account of the principle of respect to law and constitution contained therein.

In the present instance, my motion implies no direct blame or censure upon the government. It is the ratification by parliament of the principles laid down in their order in council of October last, and re-asserted, though in a milder way, in their public statement of the same date. What does the order in council say ?

Such an expenditure, under such circumstances, cannot be regarded as a departure from the well known principles of constitutional government and colonial practice, nor construed as a precedent for future action.

And what comment did the hon. Minister of Finance put upon that reservation in the official statement he made the same day in the name of the cabinet :

The sending of the contingent to the Transvaal involved not only the expenditure of considerable money, but the taking of an important step that had not been contemplated by parliament, and which might possibly be regarded as a precedent, when in a matter of so much consequence pre-

cedents ought not hastily to be established. Hence the first view that prevailed was that parliament should be summoned to confirm the action which was proposed.

What did *La Patrie*, which is often called the organ of the Minister of Public Works, add to the ministerial statement :

The resolution to which Sir Wilfrid and his colleagues have come, does not commit this country to any action in the future. I think I know that this point has been settled in such a way as to leave no doubt in the public mind.

The Prime Minister himself, at the opening of this session, stated that he intended preserving the legislative independence and freedom of action of this country.

If the government were sincere, as undoubtedly they were, when they gave the assurance, both to the Colonial Secretary and to the Canadian people, that they did not intend creating a precedent, and committing this country to any future action, they cannot refuse to support my motion.

It may be objected, that my motion is useless, that it is a simple repetition of what the government themselves have stated. Suppose it would be useless, there could be no objection on the part of the government to let it pass without opposition. But, I claim that, far from being useless, it deserves the favourable consideration of the House.

As I have stated on a previous occasion, the action of the government is a double one. It contains a question of fact which is the sending of Canadian volunteers to South Africa, and a question of right which is the sovereignty of parliament and of the people as regards any constitutional change which may bring our participation in Imperial wars. The government consented to the fact with the intention, of course, of having that fact ratified by parliament—but also under the explicit reservation of constitutional principles which they considered to be under the exclusive power of parliament. They said themselves that they would not have consented to the action without that reservation. They asked us the other day to ratify their action. I now ask the House to sanction the reservation, and to uphold the principles which the government themselves asserted in their order in council, as well as in their official declaration. My motion is the natural consequence of those documents, as well as the completion of the Bill, adopted by this House to ratify the unauthorized expenditure of the government. You have sanctioned the fact, now sanction the right.

But, there is another reason for making my motion, not only useful, but absolutely imperative. It comes from the grave facts which I have put before the House. The whole of the reptile press, as well as a large portion of the decent newspapers of England and Canada, Liberal, Conservative, and Independent ; and I may say the unan-