

to take a great risk—a very great risk in its hands and upon its shoulders. The Government has to take the risk of the approval of its course by Parliament.

**Ample
Justification.**

In the matter in hand, had we not ample justification to believe that our course would be justified by Parliament? As soon as Parliament met we submitted our action to it. We laid before it everything that we had done. Our resolution stood the fire of a long discussion, and the principle of our action was approved unanimously by this House. The resolution introduced by the Finance Minister to cover the expenditure incurred in sending the contingent to Africa has received the unanimous sanction of this House. What avails it to-day, then, to say that we have not behind us the force of public opinion, that we were not to be guided solely by the voice of the press? Public opinion has more than one means of expressing itself. There is not only the press, but there is what is heard on the street and in private conversations, and what one can feel in the air. We knew that that public opinion was with us. It is true that my hon. friend has stated on another occasion, I believe, that it is a weak thing to be guided by public opinion. Well, sir, I do not look on it as a weak thing. (Hear, hear.) If public opinion were to ask something against one's honor, or one's sense of right, or one's sense of dignity, it would be a weak thing indeed to follow public opinion; but if the voice of the people asks for a thing that is right and honorable, would it not, then, be a good thing to follow the voice of public opinion? It would be a weak thing not to follow the voice of public opinion.

**If the
Government
Had Refused.**

I put this question to my hon. friend: What would be the condition of this country to-day if we had refused to obey the voice of public opinion? (Hear, hear.) If we had refused at that time to do what was, in my judgment, our imperative duty, it is only too true that a most dangerous agitation would have arisen—an agitation which, according to all human probability, would have ended in a line of cleavage upon racial lines. A greater calamity would never take place in Canada. My hon. friend and I have long been on terms of intimacy. He has long been a political friend and supporter of mine. He knows as well as any man in this House knows that if there is one thing to which I have given my political life it is to try to pro-

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