

whereby their votes, together with the votes of hundreds of men and women who had never seen in Canada, were poured by emissaries of the Government into specially selected constituencies, with no object other than that of ensuring the defeat of candidates opposed to the Administration, a course of action which, by the way, has been openly defended and commended by my right hon. friend on the very floor of Parliament. My right hon. friend knows quite well that there are sitting in this House of Commons to-day many members who would not be sitting here at the present time if the election had taken place under the old Dominion Franchise Act instead of under those particular Acts.

Unless we have a representative Parliament, what becomes of any theory of the supremacy of Parliament? The supremacy of Parliament is based in every particular upon the circumstance that Parliament is supposed to be truly representative of the will of the people. I have not, however, mentioned these two particular measures for the purpose of enlarging upon the iniquities which helped to disgrace the record of our Canadian history at the time; my purpose is to draw the attention of Parliament to the circumstance that both those Acts have been repealed, and that we have at the present time upon the Statutes a new Franchise Act which was passed by this Parliament at the last session. The meaning of that is simply this, that this Parliament recognized that the franchise under which the members of the present Parliament had been returned was not a franchise which adequately represented the views of the people of this country at the present time. They recognized that that was a franchise permissible only for war purposes and that its ends were served when the war was over. When we have a new Franchise Act passed by this Parliament which gives the right of the ballot to thousands of citizens who had not that right previously, for the Government to continue to carry on in view of the support that it is getting from representation effected under those old methods, constitutes, I maintain, a direct usurpation of popular government in this country.

That brings me to the third point on which I think my right hon. friend has already attempted to justify his carrying on of the Government of the country. He has attempted to justify it on a literal interpretation of what was said in the campaign of 1917. He has said that the then Prime Minister gave no pledge at that time; that the Government of that day did not commit

itself. That line of defence implies such colossal deception that I do not think any ministry could feel itself so unworthy as to come before the people on such a ground.

Does my right hon. friend wish it to be assumed that when he and his distinguished predecessor in the high office of Prime Minister of Canada were appealing in the name of patriotism to men and women of all classes to forget party and party considerations, when they were appealing to mothers for their support that an end might the more speedily be made to the sacrifice of their sons, and the slaughter of human lives, that all the time they were cherishing a mental reservation which looked beyond the winning of the war to personal aggrandizement and the maintenance of political power when the war was won, regardless altogether of the nature of their appeal. The thought is too abhorrent even to entertain. I refuse to believe any thing so unworthy of my fellow countrymen, and least of all of those who have come to occupy a distinguished position in our public life.

I do not wish to take up too much time in discussing this matter further. I might, however, direct the attention of my right hon. friend to a very important circumstance, namely, that fortunately some of his former colleagues in the late ministry view their obligations to the people in a different way from that in which he is prepared to view his obligations at present. We have had five resignations by Liberal members of the previous ministry, and I think all of them have been on the ground that the hon. members who resigned felt that when they entered the Unionist administration the public believed they were entering a war administration and that when that administration had served its purpose, their right to continue longer in office was at an end. On June 4, 1919, the hon. member for Marquette (Mr. Crerar) resigned; on August 2, 1919, the hon. member for Victoria-Carleton (Mr. Carvell) resigned; on January 1, 1920, the hon. member for Hamilton East (Mr. Mewburn), then Minister of Militia and Defence, resigned; on February 23, 1920, the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Maclean) resigned, and on July 8, 1920 the then President of the Privy Council, the hon. member for Durham (Mr. Rowell) resigned. All of these gentlemen have read their obligations to the people in terms wholly different from those in which my right hon. friend is reading his obligations at the present time. They, at least, did not have

any mental reservations one way or the other in what they were leading the people to believe at the time they entered the Unionist administration and appealed to the country.

I have mentioned certain members of the late Government who have read their obligation in a different way. There is one other member of the Government that I should like to quote in the matter of obligation, because he happens to be a member of my right hon. friend's administration. I think there are only two of the original so-called Liberal members of the day who went into the Union Administration who are now in my right hon. friend's ministry. I have here a quotation from a speech made by my hon. friend the Minister of Immigration and Colonization (Mr. Calder) in this Parliament at the time the hon. member for Marquette resigned from the Government, and perhaps it will be worth while to give it just to show how my hon. friend viewed the matter of resignations at that time. Here is what he said (Hansard, p. 3341):

Let me ask hon. members of this House what would be the consequences if we all followed the course taken by the hon. member for Marquette (Mr. Crerar). Suppose the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Carvell) resigned, and the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Rowell), and the Acting Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Maclean), and myself and others should resign—

at which point there was some interruption, when my hon. friend continued:

Do not be too sure, my friends, the task of carrying on government in this country and the responsibilities that are thrown upon public men are not so alluring as some hon. gentlemen seem to think. I say that if those resignations did take place there would immediately be a political crisis in this country, and one thing, and one thing only, could happen: either the Prime Minister would have to appeal to the country, or he would have to advise the Governor General to call upon my friend who leads the Opposition to form a new Government.—(Hansard, p. 3341).

Well, all these resignations, and others, save alone that of my hon. friend, have taken place. Are we to assume, then, that he is the slender thread on which the fate of the ministry hangs; that it is to his presence in the ministry we owe the aver- sion of a political crisis, and the one thing and one thing only that could happen? If that be so, let me assure my hon. friend that the greatest service he can render the country is to drop out of the ministry just as speedily as possible.

I come now to the last mentioned of the arguments enunciated, namely, that the leader of the Opposition himself does not

desire an election. I would hesitate to make mention of this contention, since it is so puerile, were it not that my right hon. friend himself has put it forward on different occasions, and one or two of his colleagues have busied themselves whispering it about.

What, may I ask, have my wishes or desires to do with this matter, or, for that matter, the wishes or desires of my right hon. friend, or any other member of this House on either side of you, Mr. Speaker?

It is not a matter of wish or desire; it is a matter of right and duty: the right of the people to self-government, and the duty of their representatives in Parliament to be scrupulous in the defence of that right whenever it appears to be infringed. It is the basis of all our liberty, and our one sure defence against arbitrary behaviour and revolutionary tendencies in matters of government.

My right honourable friend says he has been all over Canada and has heard no demand for a general election. That only proves that his hearing is not as good as my own. I may tell him that I also have crossed the Dominion from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and everywhere I have gone, it is the one demand I have heard.

But if he has not heard it, perhaps he has seen it in the record of the by-elections which have been held since the termination of the War. They reveal an overwhelming public opinion against the Government.

Whilst a general election has been refused the by-elections show an overwhelming public opinion against the Government. The Government's record in the by-elections is a tale of defeat, a story, for the most part, of enormous majorities wiped out, and enormous majorities recorded against them. Since the armistice was signed there have been in all sixteen by-elections. These are divisible into three groups: by-elections of hon. members opposite who are in the ministry; by-elections held in constituencies that were won by the Liberals in 1917; and by-elections in constituencies that were won by the Unionist Administration in 1917.

Take the case first of by-elections of Ministers. We all know that constituencies normally are gratified to see their members made Ministers of the Crown. It requires a strong wave of popular indignation to defeat a minister; usually his return is by acclamation. That was so in the case of my honourable friend the Minister of Finance (Sir Henry Drayton). It was recognized by the country that at this, of all times, it was important the coun-