

party, but I may point out to them, as well as to every other hon. gentleman in this House, that the amendment upon which the vote is to be taken is not an amendment upon party politics. It is a declaration as to constitutional principles. I see my hon. friend the Minister of Finance (Mr. Robb) smiles, because he realizes that doubtless if this amendment should receive the approval of parliament it would follow as a matter of course that the first minister should tender his resignation. Suppose he does so, what is the situation so far as the Progressive party is concerned? If there was a change of government to-morrow, the Progressive party would exercise in this House identically the same power, the same influence and would be in the same position as it is to-day. But the amendment is to vindicate the principles, yea the sanctity of our constitutional system, in our parliament. As to the fate of the Prime Minister and his colleagues who, in face of a reverse at the polls in a general election, cling with slippery hands to office, it is a matter, of course, of taste. There is an old text which tells us that "the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life." These gentlemen have reversed the order, and with them it is the spirit of the electorate that killeth and the letter which giveth them life. Now if evidence is needed that this government ought not to continue to direct the affairs of Canada, I can produce an authority that at least should command some respect at the hands of hon. gentlemen opposite. I refer to their leader, the late member for North York. We are all familiar with that long blaze of apologies which he made at Richmond Hill when he said among other things—time does not decently permit me to quote more than one of them, perhaps two:

Is it sufficient that as a government we should continue in office, drawing our indemnities and salaries as members and ministers and enjoying the other fruits of office, when great national questions press for solution with which, for want of an adequate majority in parliament, we are unable satisfactorily to cope.

Now that was a gem of purest ray. What a lofty position he took on that occasion. Can he occupy that position to-day? Most assuredly not.

The hon. member for Kindersley (Mr. Carmichael) who has just addressed the Chair, has dealt with portions of the Speech from the Throne. I do not intend to treat of that Speech beyond saying this, that it is one long list of concessions to a party without whose support the government would not last one hour. Death-bed repentances are frequently subject to suspicion; political death-bed repentances, always.

[Mr. Carmichael.]

Mr. LAPOINTE: The Hamilton speech, for instance.

Mr. WHITE (Mount Royal): The Hamilton speech does not embarrass me in the slightest. At the appropriate time I am prepared, frankly, candidly and in no unmistakable language, to express my opinion upon that speech. It may become a subject of debate before this session is very old, but I do not think it is particularly pertinent to the amendment that is now before the House. The Minister of Justice declared in somewhat resonant tones—

We all desire the situation to be regularized in order that we shall have a government with full moral and political authority for the tasks, domestic, imperial and international that lie before it.

That is what the Minister of Justice desires. This is what his chief and leader believes:

All sufficient as these reasons—said Mr. Mackenzie King—may be for not attempting another session of parliament before a general election, there are other reasons of even greater weight. I refer now to all-important national problems that are pressing for solution, and which cannot be solved in a parliament constituted after the manner of the parliament elected in 1921, or by any government which does not command a substantial majority in the House of Commons.

Which horn of the dilemma do hon. gentlemen propose to take? They cannot have both, and I imagine either one is somewhat embarrassing. I should like, for a moment—and I hope I am not digressing beyond the four corners of the amendment—to say a word as to the Conservative party in the province of Quebec from which I come.

An hon. MEMBER: Mr. Patenaude.

Mr. WHITE (Mount Royal): Mr. Patenaude, when he was selected as chief of the Conservative party in the province of Quebec, caused a shiver to run through the ranks of the Liberal party. Mr. Patenaude has not yet run his career, and if life is spared him, he will yet sit in this House to promote, promulgate and support Conservative doctrine and Conservative principles.

If without seeming to indulge in too much liberty, I may tell the House a little story, it is this. Years ago in the good old city of Quebec when the Irish relatively to the French were larger in numbers than they are to-day, it was the habit of the Irishmen on the 17th of March, in the absence of their hereditary enemies in the north of Ireland, to come out and give battle to the French-Canadians. On one occasion an Irishman who had sallied out with his shillalah early in the morning to vindicate his rights and the superiority of his race, returned home at an unexpectedly early hour with two lovely