

Premier's right hand and at his left, professing friendship for him in private, professing confidence in him before the public, were conspiring to raise a mutiny against him whenever it should seem to them that the time had arrived when they could most surely kill him politically. It would seem that the hon. member for King's (Mr. Foster) is blest with instincts so peculiar and so abnormal, that they did not inform him beforehand of the effect that such a statement as he made would have upon the public feeling of the country. When he avowed his political treachery, he did not seem to know that it would bring upon him the contempt of people of both parties throughout the country, and that it would rally a strong feeling of sympathy to the support of the man whom he wished to politically assassinate.

On his own statement this was a conspiracy and a mutiny against the leader of the Government, and further proof of it is to be found in the time chosen for bringing it to a head. If the object of the consultation, or rather I should say, if the understanding, between these seven who are properly dubbed by the press as "wreckers" had been to reconstruct the Government with the purpose of securing a strong Ministry for the Conservative party in Canada, they would have worked out the question, as my friend from Bothwell (Mr. Mills) says, in a party caucus long before the House met. But they kept mum. They bided their time; they waited until the policy of the Government had been announced; they waited until an adjournment had been obtained, ostensibly because the House was called too soon after the holidays; they waited for what might be called the psychological moment to drive the blow home, to assassinate the man whom they were bound, in party fidelity and common decency, to defend against surprise and against all midnight attacks. It is therefore clear that their object was not to strengthen the Government but to drive out of power one man who stood in the way of their ambition.

I repeat that the hon. member for King's (Mr. Foster) was mistaken, if he thought he would gain anything by that announcement. I must say, as a Liberal and as an opponent of Sir Mackenzie Bowell for twenty-three years or more, that I myself felt stirred by a sympathy which I cannot refrain from expressing upon the floor of this House, a sympathy for that gentleman under the circumstances in which he is placed. He had been sitting for thirteen months or so with colleagues who were plotting against him. It is no wonder that he did not make a success of his Government, as we all know he did not. What Prime Minister could succeed with half of his Government plotting against him? It is no wonder that he could not fill up the vacancies in his

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Cabinet, for who would choose to sit with such colleagues as these gentlemen have confessed themselves to be?

I think, Sir, I am speaking the sentiment of all Liberals. I know I am speaking my own, when I say that we have no sympathy with this kind of domestic treachery. We are anxious to beat Sir Mackenzie Bowell and his Cabinet and to beat them as completely as possible, but we desire to beat them openly in a fair field and without any personal disgrace to the man who is beaten. We do not sympathize with mutiny. I should be glad to see the captain subdue this mutiny. I should be glad to see him bring his ship into the fight in the open sea of the general elections, and there sustain as severe a defeat as possible at the hands of the leader of my own party.

Sir, there is another question that I think must be spoken of before we leave this subject. I refer to the intervention of a salaried officer of this Government in the Cabinet making transactions which have been, or are now going on. By whom was Sir Charles Tupper sent for? At whose suggestion was he sent for to come to Canada at this crisis? We are told that as a matter of form he was sent for by the Premier to discuss, as he says, the East Atlantic Service, the Pacific Cable, and perhaps the Chignecto Ship Canal. We do not know how much the Chignecto Ship affair had to do with it, but we do know that Sir Charles Tupper was to return to England at a fixed date. He did not go on that date. He is still here, and he is known to be in consultation with the members of one or other of the two existing Cabinets on the other side of the House. He is in fact intriguing with one side or the other, perhaps with both.

What has become of the self-respect of the leaders of the Conservative party, or of those who are claiming to be the new leaders of it, when they take into consultation a public servant in the intrigues which are going on as to who shall rule the country? Nay, Sir, it is suggested and proposed, as everybody knows, that Sir Charles Tupper himself should become the leader of the new Government. He has always been the "deus ex machina" of these gentlemen. He has always been the great medicine man to be sent for whenever the Government was sick, and now it appears that he is to be called upon to lead the mutineers, to lead the "wreckers" in the formation of a new Ministry.

We cannot say whether or not he may succeed in attaining that eminence; but we can say that it is a scandal to public propriety that a highly salaried servant of the people, supposed to be the non-partisan representative of Canada in the mother country should be here receiving public pay, while he is spending his time in assisting to wreck the Gov-