

beliefs, merely by the threat of dissolution. That is a violation of the rights of members; it is subversive of private rights. It is contrary to reason itself inasmuch as it compels men to vote against what they deem to be proper, in order to maintain in power for the time being a government generally proceeding in the public interest. This is something so obnoxious to me that I will do anything in my power, now or in the future, to free Canadian political life of such an anomaly.

Hon. members of this House missed an extraordinary opportunity a few years ago when they rejected a motion moved by the then member for East Calgary along the lines I have suggested. However idealistic or academic that gentleman may have been, he undoubtedly introduced on that occasion a practical motion of far-flung importance, embodying definitely as it did the principle that no government need necessarily resign as the result of an adverse vote unless such a vote were followed by a non-confidence motion. That principle should in my opinion be adopted definitely and for all time. If it were recognized to-day there would be no deadlock of this character facing us at the present moment. Parliament could function, the public interest could be served, elections could be avoided when they were palpably unnecessary, and the business of the country could be properly administered. The national interest, national sentiment, the patriotism and loyalty of our forefathers who fought the age-long battle between feudal privilege and democratic right demand that this House go on record definitely against unconstitutional action under ill advice and stand firmly for the constitutional recognition of the status of this Dominion.

Hon. J. A. ROBB (Chateauguay-Huntingdon): We have debated this question the whole day and part of the night. As a layman I had no intention of discussing a constitutional point such as this, but when hon. gentlemen opposite put up a medical man to speak for the government, I take it that it is quite in order for one who for some time has had something to do with the finances of the country to give the point of view of the people of Canada who pay the taxes.

We may differ, and honestly differ, upon the fiscal policy of this country, and we may have differences of opinion regarding our railways. We may differ with respect to such questions as the British preference or the reduction of income tax. But surely, Mr. Speaker, as a parliament we can unite on this

principle, that in this Dominion, which to-day is entering upon its sixtieth anniversary of confederation, the people who provide the taxes to pay our vast debt have a right to know that their government is constitutionally formed and that those who are collecting the taxes, the tax-gatherers, are responsible to the country. Hon. gentlemen opposite are already receiving applications to sign contracts, and favours are being asked of them. Have not, then, the people of Canada the right to know whether or not these gentlemen hold office constitutionally?

I have not one word to say against the character of the hon. gentlemen who claim to constitute this government. They have all been exceedingly kind and courteous to me and I have nothing to say against them personally. But I do contend that these gentlemen owe it to themselves and to the country to see that they are properly constituted in office. My genial friend (Sir Henry Drayton) has helped me through many difficult propositions and he himself admitted this afternoon that we had not a properly constituted government.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: Properly constituted, though temporary.

Mr. ROBB: I took his words down, but he can look them up in Hansard. He admitted that we had not a properly constituted government.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: Temporary, but proper.

Mr. ROBB: If I understood him rightly he intimated that we had no government at all. Now, Mr. Speaker, this question resolves itself into one of two propositions. If hon. gentlemen opposite are properly in office as ministers of the crown, having been sworn in, they have no right to sit in the House inasmuch as they have not been re-elected. If they are not properly sworn in, then we have no government. As I feel that the House has debated the question at sufficient length, and so that we may have a pronouncement upon it, I beg to move, seconded by the hon. member for Melville (Mr. Motherwell):

That the actions in this House of the hon. members who have acted as ministers of the crown since the 29th of June, 1926, namely the hon. members for West York, Fort William, Vancouver Centre, Argenteuil, Wellington South, and the hon. senior member for Halifax, are a violation and an infringement of the privileges of this House for the following reasons:

1. That the said hon. gentlemen have no right to sit in this House, and should have vacated their seats