

ON PARLIAMENT HILL

BY A MEMBER OF THE PARLIAMENTARY PRESS GALLERY

OTTAWA, January 16th, 1926 - In the early hours of Friday morning, Parliament by a majority vote of three sustained the Liberal government, defeated the amendment of censure and non-confidence introduced by the leader of the Conservative Opposition, Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen on opening day, and vindicated the position taken by the Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King following the general election of October 29th.

The government was supported by nineteen Progressives, the two Independent members, A. W. Neill (Comox-Alberni), and Mr. Henri Bourassa (Labelle), and the two Labor members from Winnipeg, J. S. Woodsworth and A. H. Heaps.

The vote proclaimed in effect that Mr. Mackenzie King and his advisers had interpreted correctly the opinion on policy of the electorate when, under the existing circumstances, decision was made to retain office until it was possible to call Parliament together and receive the verdict of the elected representatives of the people.

Why Complications Existed

Briefly reviewed the circumstances were these:

Owing to the situation arising through representation by several groups in the House of Commons, no one group had a majority over all with which to carry on. The Conservative group was the largest, 116 members, but lacked the necessary seven to be even one more than half in a Parliament of 245 members. Progressive and Labor members had been elected on platforms akin to that of the Liberal party and strenuously opposed to Conservative policies. Neither Liberal nor Conservative party could carry on without co-operation of the independent groups and between these and the Conservatives a gulf was fixed.

A. Speakman (Red Deer) Progressive, speaking towards the close of the debate voiced the reason which influenced his decision to vote against the Conservative amendment and with the government,