

divergence of opinion that existed between the two divisions of the present cabinet on the navy question not longer than a few short months ago, I would like some one to tell me: have the traitors given in to the imperialists, or have the imperialists given in to the traitors. The people of Canada would like an answer to that question, and they are entitled to be informed as to what policy on the naval question has succeeded in bringing together the divergent views represented in the present cabinet.

Mr. L. J. GAUTHIER (St. Hyacinthe). When I was returned for the electoral district I have the honour to represent I made up my mind that when first I would address this House I would speak in my own language, it being easier for me to do so, and I thought that if on the 21st September last the voice of Toronto had been heard all over Canada it was nothing but fair that the French voice of Quebec should be heard at least once in a while in the House of Commons, and that my native tongue should have the right accorded to it by the constitution of this country. Since the opening of parliament, Mr. Speaker, you have been appointed to your high office, and prompted by courtesy and deference to you, Mr. Speaker, and also by the desire that my remarks should be understood by the majority of hon. gentlemen in this House, I decided to address the House in the English tongue, although I cannot master it as I would like.

In taking part in this debate I of course understand that I shall not have the sympathy or favour of hon. gentlemen who are supporting the government of the day because every one of them who has taken part in this discussion has declared that speeches were of no use and that we were simply wasting the time of the House and squandering the money of the people in taking up so much time on the question at issue. Well, if we read the remarks which have been made by different members supporting the government, we can quite understand why they should like this debate to be short. For instance, if you take the last utterance of the Finance Minister (Mr. White), he began by saying that he had no connection whatever with corporations, combines, trusts and mergers and that he was free from all entanglements with these concerns, but every one in the country, who will read to-morrow the speech he has made, will be rather surprised to find that the only aspect of the question of reciprocity which he would discuss, that the only argument he advanced against reciprocity in reply to those who opposed the government, was that it was better for the farmers of the west to lose the profit they could make on their grain so long as

Mr. MARTIN.

the railway corporations got the hauling dues on that grain.

Mr. WHITE (Leeds). I never said that.

Mr. GAUTHIER. I want to refer to a remark made by the hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Mr. Hazen). That hon. gentleman told us that the government had decided to cancel the naval policy of the late administration. It is all right for the government to make such a statement, but does the government believe that the people of this country will think for a moment that all the members who sit on the Treasury Benches have come to a decision to set aside the naval policy of the late administration without also having come to an understanding as to their policy which is to take the place of that which they have cancelled. No one will believe that. There is no one who will not come to the conclusion that when this government decided to set aside the naval policy of the late administration, they must, before doing so, have come to some understanding, and we are entitled to know what that understanding or agreement is.

My hon. friend the first minister (Mr. Borden), has said that during the course of the debates in the last two years he did not, it is true, see eye to eye with an hon. colleague the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Monk), but the difference of opinion between them, he claimed was but a small one, it was only regarding the question of a referendum. Well, if I remember aright the leader of the government wanted a referendum because he claimed the late government was not doing enough on the naval question, whereas the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Monk) wanted a referendum because he thought the late government was doing too much and he did not want it to do anything at all. Well, if these two gentlemen have come to an agreement, we are entitled to know what were the terms of that agreement. I must admit that when the hon. the First Minister (Mr. Borden) saw fit to take into his cabinet the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Monk), that hon. gentleman was good enough for me personally. I have no objection to his personality, but the people who, during the late electoral contest, were told by the friends of the hon. Minister of Public Works (Mr. Monk) in the province of Quebec that there were three parties in the Dominion, namely, the Liberal party, having Sir Wilfrid Laurier as its chief, the Conservative party, having Mr. Borden as its chief, and the party of honest men having Mr. Monk as its chief—these people will want to know, and are entitled to know, what agreement has been come to between the Minister of Public Works and his leader. If the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Monk) was the chief of the third party—