

the government in increasing the subsidy by \$2,000,000 to the Crow's Nest road over the amount of subsidy offered by the late government, and the introduction of the bill for the I rummond County road, which this House threw out, and for which they received the approval of the country, and now followed by this particular bill, the climax of their legislation upon railway matters, are all matters which might well cause comment and which warrant one in looking with a degree of caution upon contracts of this character. I say, therefore, that legislation of this character warrants from this chamber the most careful scrutiny. If all the safeguards which have surrounded legislation of this character are to be at once set aside, and we are to accept the statement that time, urgency and state reasons, &c., justify the action taken by the government, we might as well abdicate the functions imposed upon us as a parliament, and give to the government a free hand to legislate upon all matters irrespective of public opinion.

Hon. Mr. POWER—It is a pleasure to listen to the hon. gentleman who has just resumed his seat, and it is a pleasure to answer him. I only regret that just at the present moment I have not the physical vigour which would enable me to answer him in a satisfactory way—I mean in the matter of voice. But I propose to make a few observations on what he has said. The first point which the hon. gentleman made was that the hon. gentleman who leads this House occupied a position inconsistent with his previous professions, that he or the party with which he had been associated, had been in favour of reducing the number of ministers, and consequently he should not have accepted office. The natural answer to that is that no member of the liberal Party ever proposed to abolish the Department of Justice, and if any department was to be abolished it would be some other one; and, for my part, I am very glad indeed that the hon. gentleman who now occupies the position of Minister of Justice did not propose to abolish this department but would let some other department go. Then the hon. gentleman made a statement which I was rather surprised to hear from a gentleman of his astuteness and his familiarity with the law which deals with parliament and government. The hon. gentle-

man said that the gentleman who was last Minister of Justice had contravened the independence of Parliament Act by sitting in this House when he proposed, or expected, to be appointed Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—I did not say any such thing. What I did say was that the liberal party had strongly urged that no member of parliament should be allowed to remain in the House in anticipation of resigning, and taking a public office or portfolio other than that of Minister of Justice. My hon. friend is not familiar with the platform of his party yet.

Hon. Mr. POWER—The hon. gentleman is making a distinction without a difference. I understood the hon. gentleman quite correctly. He contended that the position of Sir Oliver Mowat when he sat in this House, in view of his subsequent appointment to the Lieutenant Governorship of Ontario, was inconsistent with liberal principles.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Liberal professions, not liberal principles.

Hon. Mr. POWER—I am surprised the hon. gentleman should say a thing of that kind, because in the first place, there is no evidence whatever that Sir Oliver Mowat knew he was going to be Lieutenant Governor of Ontario at that time.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—He refused it once.

Hon. Mr. POWER—And, in the next place, it would not in the slightest degree contravene the independence of Parliament, because Sir Oliver Mowat already filled an office of emolument under the Crown when he was Minister of Justice; and the thing which the liberal party have objected to, and the thing which is contrary to the spirit of the independence of Parliament Act, is that a member should sit in either House as a private member holding a secret promise of office from the government. It is pleasant to listen to the hon. gentleman saying these things. He says them in an agreeable way, and they are sometimes amusing, at any rate; but I just wish to indicate that there is really no serious weight in some of the things he said. Then the hon. gentleman having before him