

us. It is whether we, as a body politic, are well off as we are or whether we are not. We find we are protected by the flag of England, by its navy, by its armies, and by its diplomatists, and we do not want to change that condition. Why should we ask England to have diplomatic agents of our own all through the world? Do we think we would gain anything by taking that position, that we would secure more authority, influence and respect at those Courts than we do to-day, were our affairs transacted by the Ambassadors and *chargé d'affaires* of England? No, we would be in this position; we would be a small people of 4,000,000 without any army or navy as we are to-day, begging those powers that they would do something for us. But when we are represented by the mighty Empire of Great Britain, then we have influence, power and authority. Our representatives, that is to say, the British Ambassadors, speak on equal terms with the men whom they address; but we could not be in such a position otherwise. The hon. gentleman will say: "If you are in that position and you have Ambassadors and Consuls all through the world you must take the consequence, and therefore you must have an army or navy in order to be respected," which means a very large sum of money annually to be added to our Budget. I wish to know from those hon. members who will vote for the motion of the hon. leader of the Opposition, whether they will go to the electors of this country and tell them: "Gentlemen, our policy is changed since we came before you on the last occasion, our policy is now one of commercial independence which will involve political independence as well, and as we are now separating ourselves from the Mother Country we must have a navy and army, Ambassadors and Consuls, and as we shall have to tax the people to pay the expenses we must add so many more millions to the expenditure." I wish joy to the hon. gentlemen who go to the electors and tell them this, if they hope to receive their votes. We are content with the position we hold as a country, with the protection of England; her flag is there to protect us and her flag is a power that gives us safety. When we have required the help of Great Britain, when we have required the protection of her flag, of her navy, of her army, did they ever fail us? They never failed us, and they will never fail us. When we went in 1866 to England as the representatives of this country to ask England to give us a charter for our Confederation, to change our position in order that we might better serve the country and the Empire, did they refuse us? They took our charter, word for word, as we laid it in their hands and passed it so. And why should we change our position in order that we may have the pride and consolation of saying: "This man at Paris, this other man at Lisbon, this other man at Madrid, this other man at Berlin, these men are the Ambassadors of this great and mighty people of four millions." Well, Mr. Speaker, we do not wish that. At all events on this side of the House. We wish to speak of our British Ambassador at Berlin, at Paris or Madrid, and wish to be able to say that these gentlemen represent us as well as the rest of the Empire. We prefer to remain attached to England with all its power, authority and influence than to have the small satisfaction of saying: "We are independent." Independence may come perhaps, but it will not come in our days nor in the days of our children, nor, I believe, in the days of our grandchildren. When this country has a population of 40,000,000 or 50,000,000 of people, it will be for the people of that day to say whether it would be better to change the position they hold to-day, or, all being well, whether it would not be best to leave well enough alone and cling to the old flag of England under which their forefathers fought and under which they would fight as well. I regret exceedingly that my hon. friend from Montreal East (Mr. Coursol) should have taken the course he has, and separated himself from us on this question. He said there was no reason why this

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should be considered a want of confidence resolution, seeing that two other motions of amendment for a Committee of Supply were passed, and yet the Government did not withdraw. As I said in the first place those two motions were prepared by our own friends and in the second place the Government assented to them because they met with our approval. Having said so much, Mr. Speaker, I resume my seat, confident that the large majority of this House will vote against this resolution.

Mr. HOUDE. Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to say more than a few words, and I shall not detain the House long. I wanted only to say that I approve of the principle involved in the motion which the hon. member for West Durham made, but I had decided not to vote for it, considering the way in which it was presented to this House. But the manner in which the hon. Minister of Public Works has put the question before this House and before the public obliges me to vote for the motion directly as it stands, for this reason, that I understand the motion of the hon. member for West Durham did not go so far as the Government intends to go on that question—that is to say, to put the question of the complete independence of Canada before the people. I understand that the hon. member intended only to put the question before this House and the country of obtaining greater facilities for negotiating treaties with foreign countries directly through our own representatives, but the Government say that we cannot follow such a course without going directly to the complete independence of Canada and her complete separation from the Mother Country. Mr. Speaker, I regret that the hon. Minister of Public Works contended that we could not vote for the motion of the hon. member for West Durham (Mr. Blaïke) without voting non-confidence in the Government. I just explained why I was obliged to vote for that resolution, yet, notwithstanding the position the hon. Minister takes, I do not intend to imply by that that I vote non-confidence in the Government.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. You cannot do that.

Mr. HOUDE. We had some instances of that during the present Session, and if we want other instances to justify such a vote, I can refer to the vote of this House in 1873, when it passed a similar motion, made in amendment to the motion to go into Supply, bearing on the policy of the Government, and the Government did not consider it a motion of non-confidence and did not resign. And I think I may congratulate myself and the country on this modification of the extraordinary and unreasonable interpretation of Ministerial responsibility which some would try to continue to this day, interpreting adversely to the Government a vote of this kind. We must not carry that idea of the responsibility of the Ministry so far as to leave to private members no opportunity of expressing their opinion on the merits of questions submitted to them. Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Public Works told us that we were going before the country either this year or next, and that we shall have to discuss this question before the people. I thought we were not to make that question an issue in the next general election; but of course the Government can make it a question of the day and oblige their friends and the Opposition to debate it before the electors. I can say this, it will not be the first time I shall have discussed this question before my own constituents. When, four years ago, I was discussing before them the National Policy, propounded by the hon. members of the present Government, I foreshadowed that the next step to be taken would be to look for more foreign markets, outlets for the products of the country, which products would be increased by the policy we advocated, and that opinion has been so far justified that no later than two years afterwards the Government themselves felt the necessity of looking for more extensive markets for this country and sent a delegate