

*Supply—Formation of Ministry*

legislation and to perform all the other functions of parliament. I quote subsection 13:

Whenever any person holding the office of President of the Privy Council, Minister of Finance, Minister of Justice, Minister of Militia and Defence, Secretary of State, Minister of the Interior, Minister of Railways and Canals, Minister of Public Works—

And so on through the whole list of them.—or any office which is hereafter created, entitling him to be a minister of the crown, and being at the same time a member of the House of Commons, resigns his office, and, within one month after his resignation accepts any of the said offices, he shall not thereby vacate his seat, unless the administration of which he was a member has resigned, and a new administration has been formed and has occupied the said offices.

Do hon. gentlemen opposite assert that they have "occupied the said offices"? If they do that, they are absolutely tied to the emolument clause. So I say to them: They find themselves on the horns of a dilemma that cannot be escaped. They are in a cul de sac of their own making. Their board of strategy led them up a blind alley. I must presume, in view of the record of last session, that the board of strategy is operating overtime.

Mr. Speaker, the leader of the acting government, knowing the complete unconstitutionality of his position, not only is not entitled to dissolution, but should not ask for dissolution, and if he asks for dissolution he should not get it. The issue is this: Are we now to assert that in Canada the Governor General possesses a right over the people, over the parliament of this country, that the king himself does not possess in Great Britain? The hon. member for South York (Mr. Maclean) will never subscribe to that doctrine, I do not care how partisan his inclinations may be. I know the hon. gentleman too well; I know that on this question—and I am pleading to him simply because I want him to be fully aware of the responsibilities of his position—the hon. member for South York will vote with us should a vote be taken on this question. Otherwise he could not face his people with honour after his fight of years on this question.

I stated at the very outset that Mr. Meighen did not seek the co-operation of this group. He has throughout the whole of this session, if not himself personally, through his satellites behind him, viciously attacked us, described us as those who were on the auction block, as those who were accepting bribes, who were bartering, who were guilty of almost every wretched act that could bring this parliament into disrepute. The right hon. gentleman is at least consistent. He has not to my knowledge invited co-operation at all.

[Mr. E. J. Garland.]

We stand prepared in any constitutional position or under constitutional circumstances to extend to the leader of that party on a legislative programme of a progressive character exactly the same measure of co-operation that we have extended to hon. gentlemen to my right. We are as free from partisan inclinations as a group to-day as we were when we came into this House five years ago. If any evidence of that is required, all Your Honour and the members of the House have to do is to study the attitude with which we have approached questions of this kind or questions of legislation and our votes thereon.

I have nothing further to say. I congratulate the right hon. leader of the opposition in this, that he has brought to the attention of the House and the country, in most eloquent terms, in most convincing sentences, in most reasoned arguments, one of the most important questions that has ever faced the Dominion, that in my opinion has ever faced the parliament in which I have sat for five years. I was so impressed by the right hon. gentleman's speech last night that in my opinion it would be to the national advantage to keep him in opposition for five years. If the right hon. gentleman will make speeches of that kind, then his place is over here. Unfortunately, however, there faces us a situation which is solvable only by one of two methods. There should be a temporary restoration to office of my hon. friends to the right, with power of dissolution, to enable them to complete the work of the session, and if a co-operative agreement could be arrived at, so much the better. That is one course. The other is to face the facts. It is utterly ridiculous that this parliament should be hampered, hamstrung, shackled and tied year in and year out by the worn out practices of the two-party system. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that this House has a responsibility to recognize that no longer is the two-party system possible in this country. No longer is it advisable, for the people have advanced in thought, in economic opinion and in political education to a point which absolutely prohibits any continuance of the old system. It is simply absurd to suggest that on any question that comes before the House our decision must have regard to the fact that it may defeat a government, notwithstanding that there may be no desire on the part of parliament to censure the government on its general policy. On one particular issue before the House, under the system that now prevails, members may be clubbed into subjection into a breach of principle, into a violation of their own