

imagine anyone wanting to accept the chairmanship of a board which was so divided. So why blame the opposition for defeating the government? The Acting Prime Minister was the responsible minister in the House of Commons that Monday night. This is his opinion, according to Mr. Charles Lynch on January 13:

Regarding the prime ministership, he cannot imagine anyone "accepting the chairmanship of a board that was so divided."

Whose fault is it that the government was defeated on blue Monday? It was the fault of no one. But the man in charge must shoulder the responsibility. According to the *Windsor Star* of January 13, Mr. Winters said he hoped the next Liberal leader will adopt a sound policy of fiscal integrity. What about the present Liberal leader? Can any member of the House of Commons wonder why we fought to defeat this government? We, too, share the feeling that the present government is not following a sound policy of fiscal integrity. We agree with the Acting Prime Minister.

The hon. gentleman went on to say, according to the same article:

I regret we have never been able to balance the budget. We must get back to the principle of fiscal integrity.

We have not been there for a while, he suggests, but we must get back to it. Can anyone blame the opposition for attempting to defeat the government, when the man in charge aided and abetted hon. members on this side of the house to vote against it on blue Monday? Of course, the hon. gentleman does not speak very highly of the Minister of Finance—and we cannot blame him for that, either. This article goes on:

Mr. Winters said he is confident the federal budget could have been balanced and had he been minister of finance, that would have been his primary goal.

There can be no doubt about it; the hon. gentleman did not have confidence in the Minister of Finance. He found the cabinet divided and he did not want to be chairman of that board. There was only one way out. He sought to save the nation by putting the government out, too; and one cannot hold that against him.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Horner (Acadia):** What position have we reached, now? I have a clipping here from

*Motion Respecting House Vote*

the *Toronto Telegram* of February 21, which says, among other things:

The government is now badly split between men of conscience and those who would cling to office by any possible means or device.

We know that the man in charge on Monday, the Acting Prime Minister on that day, is a man of conscience. He does not intend to cling to office. He tells us he intends to resign at the end of March. He may even do so before then.

**An hon. Member:** How is he going to vote?

**Mr. Horner (Acadia):** We shall have to wait and see whether the day ever comes when he is given an opportunity to vote. We go on to wonder why he and the opposition got together on that blue Monday. This is how the *Edmonton Journal* summed up the situation on February 20:

The Liberals have been defeated in the Commons in a vote that must, by any uncontrived definition, constitute a vote of confidence: they must, if conscience and precedent are to guide, resign as the government. This being done there is little doubt that, after politics runs its course and the constitution put to yet another test, the issue will be placed before the people to decide.

This of course is exactly what we want. There is no better guide to democracy than the people themselves. That is the whole essence of the principle for which men have fought and died. It is the whole essence of the nature of democracy as distinct from communism; it is what they are fighting for in Viet Nam. We in Canada should certainly not be ashamed to exercise democracy to the fullest extent.

I call attention to what the Auditor General had to say in his report, not too long ago. Here is a clipping from the *Calgary Herald* of February 20, an article written by Bruce Phillips, which reads in part:

An unnamed auto firm, says Henderson in his annual report to Parliament, may owe the government as much as \$30,000,000 in back customs and taxes.

They let the auto manufacturers off with \$30 million, but they have already collected \$13 million of illegal taxes from the Canadian people. Are we supposed to vote confidence in a government which allows this to happen when according to the Auditor General, the auditor of the board of directors which the Acting Prime Minister would not wish to join, an unnamed auto firm has been permitted to owe the government as much as \$30 million in customs and taxes.