

May 1, 1874

With reference to the hon. gentleman's statement that he (Hon. Mr. Mackenzie) had said that every official in Halifax must vote for the Government candidate, he said that he knew his hon. friend Mr. Annand too well to believe that he made such a statement, and he did not believe he made it. (*Hear, hear.*) He (Hon. Mr. Mackenzie) took the ground that even in Nova Scotia, where officials were not debarred by law as in the other Provinces from voting, they should refrain from active interference in elections.

He did not wish to see the American system introduced into the country as the hon. gentleman did, but after this he (Hon. Mr. Mackenzie) should take good care that there not be one law in Nova Scotia and one in Ontario with regard to its officials voting, but the same rule should apply to all the Provinces, and that every class of officials would be dealt with alike. (*Cheers.*)

Mr. JONES (Halifax) said that the hon. member for Cumberland (Hon. Mr. Tupper) had thought fit to deny his (Mr. Jones's) statements with reference to every official in his county having voted for him and that every influence was brought to bear on them to get them to vote for him. He (Mr. Jones) repeated that he had it from sources more reliable than anything that fell from the hon. gentleman that every inducement he could offer, and every threat he could exercise, were used by him to get those men to vote for him.

In 1870 that hon. gentleman and his colleagues thought fit to send letters over the Province ridiculing the Local Government. In 1870 the late Government gave to each Province the law which previously existed, but in Nova Scotia they threw back the legislation under their Interim Elections Act five years in order to suit their own ends. They had suffered long enough under the operation of that law. When he (Mr. Jones) came out he made a speech, to which the hon. gentleman had referred, in which he had told the Dominion officials that they were free men and not the slaves the late Government had made them, and in which he had also stated, as he still believed, that these officials should not work actively against the Government whose servants they were. In his statements he spoke only on his own responsibility, and not from any communication with the Government.

The member for Cumberland was returned in 1867 alone, without a man from his own Province to support him, and after being in office for five or six years he was again placed in the humiliating position of being alone among the representatives of his own Province, and probably before long Cumberland would also write herself on the proper side. (*Cheers.*)

Hon. Mr. TUPPER complained that the leader of the Government had used offensive language towards him. With reference to the statement that the late Government allowed the Custom House officials to vote in Nova Scotia when they could not vote elsewhere, he asserted that under the Union Act the officials were precluded from voting in Ontario and Quebec; but in Nova Scotia the Local Legislature altered the previous state of things, which allowed those officials to vote, and this Parliament had merely retained the previous law. He proceeded to remark that the member for Halifax would probably be relieved by the Courts of his presence in this House.

Mr. JONES (Halifax) informed the hon. gentleman that his election petition had been thrown out by the judges.

Hon. Mr. TUPPER said that not half a dozen officials had voted for him at the last election. He denied that his party had at all adopted the American system, though the party opposed to them having ejected officials on political grounds, they were forced to take the same course. (*Hear, hear.*) He asserted that Ministerial pressure was never brought to bear more strongly than by this Government in the late elections.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said that the hon. gentleman stated that he (Hon. Mr. Mackenzie) had laid down a year ago that every official was free as air, when he knew that he referred only to country postmasters. He had moved the re-committal of the Interim Elections Bill to disfranchise those officials in Nova Scotia who were disfranchised in the other Provinces. It was true that the Government had adopted the franchise used in the Province, but he still thought that these officials ought not to take part in these elections. He complained of the offensive language and reckless statements of the hon. gentleman from Cumberland. The hon. gentleman had tried to make him responsible for the utterances of newspapers, but he had no connection whatever with the press, and not one paper in Canada was authorized to speak on his behalf.

Mr. CARMICHAEL stated that nearly every official in Pictou who voted for him in 1872 was dismissed on that account.

Hon. Mr. MITCHELL repudiated the statement that he had dismissed any one for political reasons, and defended the Department of Marine and Fisheries from charges of unfairness. He had been associated in the Government with gentlemen with whom he differed in politics, in order to carry out Confederation, and would not have remained in the Government had not certain charges been hanging over the Administration. He was not in accord with the Opposition, but these attacks were forcing him into Opposition. Messrs. Snow, Ball, and Hutchinson had stated in his county that all the officials who voted for him would be turned out.

Hon. Mr. SMITH (Westmorland) asked if the hon. gentleman had not stated on the hustings that his relations with the Government were such that he had control of the county.

Hon. Mr. MITCHELL said he had not. He spoke at considerable length in defence of the Administration, of which he had been a member, and which had been so much assailed during the debate with reference to the officials of the Government influencing the elections. He alleged that at this election a telegram had been sent by the present Administration, in which the officials learned that they would either vote against him or be dismissed. In the face, however, of this opposition he was returned. The last Administration could point to a series of legislative triumphs which stood as a record of their intelligence and their perseverance, and the present Government would be very fortunate if they rivalled them in their measures. He did not think the country would sustain the Government in their proposed system of lowering principle.

Hon. Mr. SMITH (Westmorland) said that the member for Northumberland had received the support of the large majority of the Government officials, and the Government had not interfered