

*Motion Respecting House Vote*

I am not necessarily a member of the opposition. Let me rather say that I am a member of the co-operation party, and I think I am the only member of this party in this part of the house, even though that may seem like boasting.

I should now like to speak about what happened last Monday night. Some of our colleagues have demonstrated by legal arguments and citations that the vote last Monday was a vote of confidence. Others have tried to prove to us that it was not. Whenever there is a difference of opinion and arguments are presented by men as serious as those whom we have heard in the house, I say that I think the house is master of its own procedure and government supporters are well justified in asking that a vote be taken and a decision made regardless of whether or not the previous vote was one of confidence. I think that precedents are not sufficient to settle the case when there are so many differences of opinion. We should vote on this matter and see whether or not the majority of the house has confidence in the government. I think the Prime Minister is right in asking for the clearcut opinion of the house.

It is my personal belief that the vote last Monday night was a vote against the increase in the income tax. It was a vote in support of what I would call the forgotten man who does not care a hoot about an election now but is desperate about the rise in taxes. A certain diplomat referred to the forgotten man in this way:

The forgotten man (who) is delving away in patient industry, supporting his family, paying his taxes, casting his votes, supporting the church and school, reading his newspaper and cheering for the politician of his admiration, but he is the only one for whom there is no provision in the great scramble and the big divide. Such is the forgotten man. He works, he votes, generally he prays—but he always pays—yes, above all he pays.

This is the man who needs to be protected under the circumstances. I think that the vote last Monday night was a vote against the increase in taxes. As Franklin D. Roosevelt said in a speech in 1932:

Taxes are paid in the sweat of every man who labours...Our workers may never see a tax bill, but they pay. They pay in deductions of wages, in increased costs of what they may buy, or in unemployment throughout the land.

We have reached the point where increases in taxes should be stopped. I think the salaried people of our country are overtaxed and they are not happy to see their legislators vote for an increase, especially in the income tax. Tax money should be found somewhere

else, and I will mention later one or two solutions.

When situations of the kind we face here arise in the house there are always some people who talk about scandals, crises and dissent among the parties. This must not be overdone. We live in a democracy, and even if occasionally we may appear to behave childishly this may be democracy at its best. For example, it has been said by numerous members of the press that the Liberals have lost the confidence of the Canadian people and that they are a weak government. It may be true that they are a weak government. We knew that the day after the election which resulted in a minority government. If the Conservatives had been in office they would also have been a weak government because, as we know, a minority government would have made them weak. However, let us say that the Liberals are trying to do their best under the circumstances, and let us say they are well supported by an opposition that is constructive most of the time, even if occasionally they think about the next election too much. I think the Conservatives are doing a decent job under the circumstances. Even if the Liberals made an awful blunder and engaged in a childish bungling of strategy last week, we must realize that this could have happened to anyone else, for such is human nature.

It has also been said that the Conservatives resorted to trickery. I do not believe that. I think the Conservatives have been doing their job. I am one of those who think that the leader of the Conservative party made a very fine statement when he said: "I am a patient man and I can wait for the verdict of the people." When he let us understand that his party would not resort to filibustering I believe he increased his prestige in the eyes of the Canadian people.

Some members have been blamed by the press and by some of our colleagues for what is considered by some to be a change of attitude. I believe an intelligent human being is always entitled to think about his attitude and, in view of new information, change his mind. The French have a saying that only fools do not change their minds. I am not one of those, therefore, who wish to blame the Creditiste members for changing their minds. I believe that rushing into an election on an issue like the 5 per cent increase in taxes would have made their position very good, perhaps better than the position of the Liberals. I believe the Creditiste members have