

arisen, it is due wholly to the hon. gentleman's own unfortunate reticence.

MR. DAVIES (P.E.I.)—Even at this late hour of the night, I do not propose to allow the Finance Minister to make the statements he has made unchallenged. In the first place, he may as well learn what we have been trying to impress upon him session after session, that the old plan of holding back important measures until all the members are tired, and slipping them through at the end of the session, and begging members not to occupy the time of the House, has seen its day, and can never be repeated again. That old plan has seen its day and cannot be repeated. The people of this country will not submit to railway subsidies and grants of millions being brought down at the last moment and members being asked to curb their criticism owing to the short time at their disposal. In this particular case, the Opposition are not open to any of the strictures of the hon. gentleman. In the first place the magnitude of the sum we are asked to spend would justify more than the two hours' discussion given it. The hon. gentleman is entirely wrong in his statement that the expenditure was incurred while Parliament was not sitting or that Parliament was taken into the confidence of the Government from time to time. The gentleman who left this country with authority to spend this money did not leave until Parliament had met. The Government had advised the world that Parliament was to be called upon to give its authority to spend the money necessary to put the militia force in a better state of efficiency, and it was the bounden duty of the Government before incurring any expenditure, to submit to Parliament the resolution now before it. They did not do that, and when pressed, time and again, for a commission, refused to give it.

MR. FOSTER—Time and again?

SIR RICHARD CARTWRIGHT—Yes, I brought it up myself once.

MR. DAVIES (P.E.I.)—It was brought up time and again, and the hon. gentleman never gave any information. He never told us that this contract had been entered into. We learn that for the first time to-night, and I submit that his appeal to us to make our little conventional protest and let the thing pass is an insult. We are not here to make conventional protests. We ask Parliament to make a solemn, serious protest of a kind that will prevent the repetition of this thing. There is no use in making protests which are not to be effective. It is childish, if not insulting, to ask us to pass this resolution on the ground that it is a loyal move. That is not what we are discussing. Whether the expenditure is justifiable or not is another matter.

MR. FOSTER—You say it is not.

MR. DAVIES (P.E.I.)—I never said anything of the kind.

MR. FOSTER—Your side did.

MR. DAVIES (P.E.I.)—We have confined ourselves to saying that the course of the Government has been unconstitutional and they ought to be censured. As far as I am personally concerned, I expressed the opinion that the Government should not now ask for a dollar of money, except what is absolutely essential to carry out their obligations. So far as the million dollars is concerned, the hon. gentleman is not justified in asking Parliament for it all.

MR. FOSTER—I am not asking Parliament for it.

MR. DAVIES (P.E.I.)—So far as the other is concerned, Parliament may, after recording its solemn opinion that the course of the Government is bad, authorize it.

MR. FOSTER—When?

MR. DAVIES (P.E.I.)—At any time.

MR. FOSTER—It would have been in the estimates last week—

MR. DAVIES (P.E.I.)—We have not had the estimates before us.

MR. FOSTER—You would not allow them to come in.

MR. DAVIES (P.E.I.)—The hon. gentleman is inaccurate, as usual.

MR. FOSTER—I beg the hon. gentleman's pardon, he has persistently fought the approach of the estimates since Thursday of last week.

MR. DAVIES (P.E.I.)—I have done nothing of the kind. There has been neither persistence nor obstruction, nor fighting off the estimates.

MR. FOSTER—I do not know what else you would call it.

MR. DAVIES (P.E.I.)—I do not know that the hon. gentleman attempted to go into the estimates but twice, and then for a very short time and at a very late hour. He is not going to escape from the point before us by irrelevant statements of that kind. The point which I tried to emphasize was that by the very insulting reference to the action of the Opposition and by the attempt to show that we ought to be content with making a little conventional opposition, and then leave things go, the hon. gentleman is simply trifling with the House. We are not content to let the thing go, and if it passes the hon. gentleman may consider himself exceedingly fortunate if he only gets off with two hours' discussion when the merits have not been one-half discussed as they ought to be.

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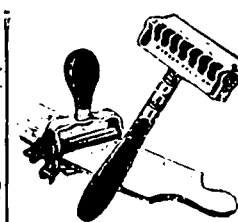
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