

Hon. Mr. TUPPER—There was the hon. member for South Bruce.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said the hon. member for South Bruce, as he understood, did not engage in the discussion further than to indicate that, if the Government were not prepared to give explicit information, they ought not to ask that large vote for money for a speculative purpose, and speculative it must be held to be to some extent until the Government was able to place before the House explicit information regarding it. He was prepared then, as he was prepared now, to state that if the House was willing to clothe the Government with authority—which he hoped they would use properly—to receive tenders, and if the tenders did not exceed a certain amount that might be deemed reasonable, the Government would proceed with the work. The manifest feeling of the House was that the work would cost more than it was worth in a commercial sense, and until the Government proved it would be different—as he presumed they would be able to do if the statements of the hon. member for Cumberland were correct—they would merely take a sufficient sum to obtain tenders and obtain the fullest information to present to the House at its opening next session. No Government was bound, either to stand or fall, upon a sum in the estimates, and they were bound to yield to the views of the House as the hon. members now in Opposition had yielded, even to striking sums out of the estimates. He did not wait for an adverse vote. He believed when an expression of public opinion was obtained in the House, it was the duty of the Government to yield thereto. And the work would not be much delayed, for it had been found impossible for the able Engineer to get the plans advanced, as they hoped to be able to do a few months ago. He had nothing further to add than to repudiate with all possible scorn the imputation which the hon. member had cast upon him.

Hon. Mr. BLAKE said he was glad to have learned from the First Minister the course which the Government proposed to take on this occasion, and thought that the observations of the hon. member for Cumberland, in reference to that course, were much to be deprecated. If there was one thing above another to be desired of a Government, and par-

ticularly with a Government possessing such a numerous following as this Government does in this House, it was that they should be, as they had shown themselves to be on this occasion, amenable to a general expression of the feeling of the House, and willing to do that which, upon full consideration and upon full debate, would be adjudged most desirable in the public interest. That they should be taunted by hon. members opposite, who were in a minority, who could not compel obedience to their views, was certainly a most short-sighted and ill-judged policy. He had no doubt those taunts would have no such effect as possibly the hon. gentleman designed. He had no doubt whatever that the leader of the Government and his colleagues would be prepared in future, as they had been on this occasion to give fair and full consideration to suggestions which might be made in this House by independent members, either their friends or foes, and which might be considered to be in the public interest. He made no such statement as that imputed to him by the hon. member for Cumberland to-night, he said nothing about permitting or not permitting the vote to pass. After the statement made by the hon. First Minister he (Mr. BLAKE) ventured to suggest that in accordance with the principle which he had advocated for many years that the House should have the fullest information before it prior to its clothing the Government with authority to mature its judgment and enter upon the work. He did not presume to form a judgment on the subject, for the hon. First Minister had stated that it was not ripe for solution, and upon that statement it appeared to him (Mr. BLAKE) that the proper course to pursue was to take a vote for such an amount as was necessary to complete the necessary inquiries. Did the hon. member for Cumberland dispute that this was sound Parliamentary doctrine?

Hon. Mr. TUPPER said he did not dispute it; but he maintained what he had previously asserted “that this doctrine was entirely at variance with that enunciated by the hon. First Minister.”

Hon. Mr. BLAKE said the hon. member did not deny that this was sound Parliamentary doctrine. Did the hon. member for Cumberland suppose that he alone had the right to state any views in opposition to the Administration of the day. The