

proceedings, and that these clumsy and abortive efforts to switch the House into other channels has failed. The amendment which I propose to make is the amendment which I read to the House after reference had been made to it by the hon. member—I almost said for Pictou—for Antigonish—Guysborough (Mr. Macdonald). I am prepared to go on with the motion now, or prepared to adjourn, whatever is the desire of hon. members opposite.

Mr. LAPOINTE: I think the point of order that will be raised in regard to this motion will have to suffer the same fate as the former motion. I contend that this motion is a pure negative of the other motion which is already before the House and cannot be put.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I hand to you, Mr. Speaker, my motion and still retain the floor. The motion reads:

In the late general election the candidates of His Excellency's then advisers, at whose instance the appeal to the country was made, were defeated in a large majority of the constituencies,

That nine ministers of the crown, including the Prime Minister, were rejected at the polls and have no seats in parliament,

That the party represented in the last parliament by His Majesty's opposition secured in the said election by far the largest support in the popular vote, and has substantially the largest number of members of any party in the present House of Commons,

That those who now assume to be His Excellency's advisers have among them no Prime Minister with a seat in either house of parliament, and under such circumstances are not competent to act as, or to become, the committee of parliament, commonly known as the government, or to address parliament through His Excellency, and their attempted continuance in office is a violation of the principles and practice of British constitutional government.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is on the amendment.

Mr. LAPOINTE: I rise to a point of order. This motion is a pure negative of the motion which is already before the House.

Mr. STEVENS: Which motion?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Of course we contend that the motion proposed by the hon. minister is not a motion at all. It is not before the House and cannot be before the House. As you, Mr. Speaker, have deferred decision on the question until Monday, as long as that postponement on the point of order on the former motion stands, I can quite readily see that Your Honour will not care to decide the point of order raised at the present time, because it entirely depends on your ruling on the former motion. I am prepared to go on.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not see any objection to the present motion moved in amendment to  
[Mr. Meighen.]

the main motion that the Speech of His Excellency the Governor General to both houses of parliament be taken into consideration on Monday. The main motion speaks for itself and this amendment to that motion is in order. The other motion objected to will come up on Monday and by my ruling the House will know if it is in order. This amendment has no relation to that first motion which was deferred until Monday. It is an amendment to the motion to debate the Address on Monday.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Mr. Speaker, we have, perhaps, enjoyed the rather ludicrous performance which members of the late government have interjected into the proceedings this afternoon and, after all, possibly, it has cost us no more than a couple of hours of time. I desire to proceed now to a discussion of this amendment and, in such discussion, to confine myself very closely, even more closely than I think is the usual custom in the House, to the terms of the amendment itself, and to present to the House an argument designed to show that, if established, the facts set out in the amendment lead inevitably to the conclusion which appears at the end of the amendment.

The terms of the amendment call upon me to establish, first of all, that in the late election the candidates of the administration of that time were defeated in a large majority of the constituencies of Canada. It is hardly necessary to take the time, but for the formal necessity of re-establishing what everybody knows, to make plain to the House that this is true. In the late election 245 constituencies were contested, if we count as two those wherein two members were to be elected. The contest resulted—and here I make no comment on the means adopted by hon. gentlemen of the government to bring about the result—in the return of 116 members of what was at that time the opposition in this House, commonly known as the Liberal-Conservative party of Canada. It resulted in the return of 101 members of the Liberal party of this country, included among whom are more than one who contested with the prefix "Independent" attached to the word "Liberal" and who, doubtless, because of that qualification, gained an accession of votes which they otherwise would have been denied. The third parties including that known as the Progressives, which has come back with, I believe, some twenty odd members, and inclusive of those who contested as Labour candidates and as Independents generally, constitute in the aggregate twenty-eight. These figures no one will contest. Indeed the only possible avenue of contestation is in relation to one constituency in Alberta which,