

solution now? Nobody who has spoken on this resolution has proved that parliament is now free, that the individual member of parliament is free to vote on issues as his conscience, or his constituents, dictate. I made the charge in my opening remarks on this resolution that the present practice, by confusing the life of the administration with the issue under consideration, left a member where he did not know exactly what to do. Two principles confronted him, and sometimes he was forced to vote against a principle in which he believed to save the government to which he had given his allegiance. But if we did away with that practice so that the government would not have to resign even if it had not had a majority on a certain measure, then that member would be free, and I have a suspicion that that is the chief reason why there is so much objection to this resolution. I can understand that such a power would not readily be given up by any government, or by those who aspire to government. It might be very handy at times. I can also conceive possibilities arising when it might be very dangerous for any cabinet to have such power.

No one has refuted my argument that bad legislation, owing to this confusion of issues, might be passed in order to save a government, nor has any one tried to refute my argument that good legislation might be defeated in order to save a government. The Prime Minister speaking with regard to the incident which I quoted from the administration of the Right Hon. Sir Robert Borden, tried to say that because a resolution was brought in afterwards by that government, that nullified my argument. On the contrary, it proved to the hilt that men sometimes vote against their beliefs. Let me reply to the Prime Minister in this way: All governments do not do as the government of Sir Robert Borden did, neither when a vote has been taken which has been considered a vote of no confidence, nor at other times. Here is the point to be remembered: whether the government resigns or not, it always holds over the heads of its members the threat that a general election might not be very far off, and a general election is not something that any of us is anxiously looking forward to now or at any other time, and the people generally do not want it until the expiration of the term of office. The members do not want to be defeated, and there you have the real whip that governs party majorities in standing behind government legislation.

In conclusion, I object to any government having the right to decide to go to the people

just when it wants, whether it has been defeated by a vote in the House or not. That practice places in the hands of the government a great political weapon, which it does not hesitate to use. This present government might decide to go to the people to-morrow, and no one could gainsay it; but it will very likely decide to go to the people when it thinks it has a political advantage, and it will not consult with the leader of the Opposition as to the proper time, nor with the leader of the Progressives, nor with the leader of the Labour party. Only the Cabinet will be consulted, and when they think the chances are good, they will declare for a general election. That is another thing that would be wiped out by this resolution. So I urge hon. members in the interests of the glorious British constitution to vote for this resolution and free themselves from the difficulties I have outlined.

The House divided on the motion (Mr. Irvine) which was negatived on the following division:—

YEAS.

Messieurs.

Bancroft,	Kennedy (Glengarry and Stormont),
Beaubien,	Knox,
Bird,	Lewis,
Black (Huron),	Lovie,
Brethen,	Lucas,
Brown,	Macphail,
Caldwell,	McBride,
Campbell,	McConica,
Carmichael,	McDonald (Timiskaming),
Coote,	McTaggart,
Davies,	Millar,
Drummond,	Milne,
Elliott (Dundas),	Morrison,
Elliott (Waterloo),	Neill,
Evans,	Sales,
Fansher,	Sexsmith,
Findlay,	Shaw,
Forke,	Speakman,
Gardiner,	Spencer,
Garland (Bow River),	Steedsman,
Good,	Stewart (Humboldt),
Gould,	Thurston,
Humphrey,	Wallace,
Irvine,	Warner,
Kellner,	Woods,
Kennedy (Edmonton),	Woodsworth—52.

NAYS

Messieurs.

Anderson,	Carruthers,
Archambault,	Chaplin,
Arthurs,	Charters,
Baldwin,	Chevrier,
Baxter,	Clark,
Benoit,	Copp,
Binette,	d'Anjou,
Black (Yukon),	Déchène,
Bouchard,	Delisle,
Bourassa,	Denis (Joliette),
Bowen,	Denis (St. Denis),
Bureau,	Drayton (Sir Henry),
Cardin,	Duff,