

education of public opinion if we fail to censure this offence—these long series of offences.

Now I turn to the position of the government itself. I have been compelled to make these remarks because of the conduct of his defence in this House by the Minister of Customs himself. Had the minister left the case as it was after the investigation, then this speech of mine would have been wholly unnecessary.

I want now to bring home to the administration this responsibility. I ask, is the administration not responsible with the Minister of Customs? I ask hon. members again to reflect on the Campbell case in England. Was the vote of censure on the attorney general alone? Did hon. members of the government of that day in England seek to say, "Here is a mistake of the attorney general's, he made it himself; do not hold us responsible." Every man of them in the Labour government stood up and took his full responsibility for the conduct of the attorney general, and that government fell because the attorney general had dared to interfere with the course of justice. Is Canada to follow that example? What is to be the name of Canada before the world if tonight, while we have the courage to attack Mr. Giroux, an underling, while we have the courage to attack Mr. Farrow, while we have the courage to put our strong arm on the shoulder of Mr. McLaughlin, to compel these men to pay the penalty of their delinquency, we show by our vote that we have not the courage to bring home even censure to those who are responsible to this House for the administration of our affairs? Here is a document we are asked to accept, whose every word we are asked to adopt as ours, here are long series of findings that we are asked to make the findings of this House, and those findings declare that for years the Minister of Customs allowed a rapid degeneration of his department to ensue—

Mr. KING (Kootenay): The minister before him.

Mr. MEIGHEN: No, they do not say anything about "the minister before him."

An hon. MEMBER: For a good reason.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Perhaps so. I am now dealing with the report as it stands. That report says that the degeneration in efficiency was greatly accelerated in the last few years.

Mr. KING (Kootenay): Yes.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Not since the minister was sick, but "in the last few years." Hon.

gentlemen cannot put less than three for those years of rapid degeneration. That minister is declared to have failed to appreciate the duties of his office altogether and he is further declared to have directed his officers to make reports and recommendations to him, repugnant upon the recited facts, in order that he might do something which the facts did not warrant. We are asked to approve of that report, to approve of every particular, and then we are asked to find that the government itself is guiltless of the malfeasance, so described.

Mr. KING (Kootenay): May I interrupt? Does not the report also show that when the present Minister of Customs came into office he immediately started the machinery which brought about the cleaning up of the department, and that the inquiry which he instituted was the basis of this debate and the success—

Mr. MEIGHEN: It shows this, that immediately the minister got information that the member for Vancouver Centre had a resolution on the order paper, he told an officer of the department, Mr. Duncan, to proceed to Montreal to see if he could not get evidence.

Mr. KING (Kootenay): And he got it.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes, he got it. I wonder why he started it? That same officer had been in the employ of the department for months back and his efforts had been wholly sterile. The moment he was told to go to Montreal on the mission that proved effective, at that very moment he was informed by the minister and discussed with the minister the Stevens resolution in this House.

Mr. KING (Kootenay): No.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Does the minister say "no"? I read the evidence this afternoon, and there is no evidence to contradict it. I do not doubt that now the case is closed, and we have to accept the word of hon. members in this House, we will get evidence yet; but I am arguing this case on the testimony before the committee, and no hon. member has any right to come to any conclusion save on the testimony there adduced. And what is more, this government would not be arraigned before this parliament to-night seeking to give evidence from the floor of this House if there was evidence they dared to give before that committee.

Now there is an amendment before this House moved by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Woodsworth)—an amendment to the amendment. The purpose

of that amendment the merest tyro in parliamentary life can easily discern. In itself it is comparatively harmless. It seeks to destroy, and if it is passed will destroy, every word and sentence of the original amendment; it seeks to destroy every word and sentence which passes the judgment of this House that the conduct of the government in permitting this state of affairs to exist is indefensible, that the conduct of the minister is utterly unjustifiable in relation to the Azis case; it seeks to eliminate this wholly, and will do so if it is passed. Then it says that you ought to amend clause 4 so as to provide for a royal commission to continue the investigation. I wonder if the hon. member ever read the report, or did he who collaborated with him to prepare this amendment ever read the report. The report itself advises the continuation of this investigation, not merely departmentally but extra-departmentally, and leaves it wholly to the government to say what form that investigation shall take. There is the body of the report. But in order to get something to put in a subamendment, in order to get a bridge upon which timid members of parliament could pass over and get away from the main amendment—in order to do that, the amendment to the amendment says: you must appoint a royal commission to continue this investigation. And the Prime Minister stands up and says that unless we vote for this and oppose the other resolution, thus defeating the main amendment, there cannot be a continuation of the investigation. Imagine the Prime Minister of Canada suggesting such a thing to the members of this House! The investigation, if this report is adopted, must go on by order of this House. The investigation can proceed by royal commission or by any extra-departmental machinery that to the government may seem fit.

The amendment to the amendment continues:

That the following be added to clause 6:  
Your committee deplors the common practice, as revealed by the evidence, of members of parliament resorting to the minister to relax the discipline of the department for personal advantage and expediency.

Now I ask the hon. member why he did not go on and say, "and of acceding to those appeals?" Why did he not say that? The member is very much absorbed. Do hon. gentlemen recall that the loudest assertion of his speech, that upon which he seemed to have the deepest conviction was a declaration that the most astounding fact of the whole thing was the appointment of Mr. Bureau to the Senate; that is what he denounced most. Will the hon. gentleman tell

me where that is in his amendment? His amendment is a lot of eyewash, purposely eyewash, froth and foam, and he knows it. His only purpose was to—

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Mr. Speaker, as a matter of privilege—

Mr. MEIGHEN: I have the floor.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I rise to a question of privilege.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I am accustomed to some of these privilege matters on the part of hon. gentlemen opposite.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: The right hon. gentleman undertakes to state what my purpose was in moving this amendment to the amendment.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I assert that the purpose which I had in view was not that which the right hon. gentleman says it was. I tried last night—

An hon. MEMBER: That is not a question of privilege.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I tried last night in the course of my address to state as clearly as I am capable of stating the reason that led me to propose this amendment to the amendment, and I submit, Mr. Speaker—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I submit, Mr. Speaker, that it is absolutely against all the rules of this parliament for any hon. gentleman to deliberately accuse me of having in view a purpose other than that which I myself stated.

Mr. MEIGHEN: What I had stated was that this was froth and foam, mere words, and I stated that its purpose was to save the government by giving a bridge for hon. members to cross who wanted to avoid a straight vote on the amendment. Now the hon. member says I cannot attribute to him an unworthy motive. I can, but if he considers it an unworthy motive—

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Mr. Speaker—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I was speaking a moment ago on a question of privilege, and I submit that already, in what the hon. gentleman has continued to say or attempted to continue to say, he is not repeating what he said a few moments ago. I urge that I have the right to say what my purpose was, and no man has a right to question that statement.