

what party will be returned, the Canadian people have the right to express their opinion on the policy of the Government and they have not had such an opportunity since 1911. In that year an election took place on the Reciprocity Agreement, and the Government of the day was defeated. It was succeeded by a new Administration, and in 1917 a general election was brought on when the policy of the present Government was not an issue at all. The questions fought out had reference solely to the conduct by the Government of the war. My hon. friend from Red Deer (Mr. M. Clark) was a supporter, and one of the candidates, of the Union Government in that election, and he has told us that the only question he spoke on during the contest was the conduct of the Union Government during the prosecution of the war. Now that issue is gone, and I maintain the time has arrived when the people of Canada should have an opportunity of expressing their views upon the Government's course and the issues involved. That is what the amendment aims at and for that reason I support it.

The ex-Minister of Finance, pleading with his supporters opposite, has claimed that we ought to have a Union Government—that Union Government should carry on and that we should have a Liberal-Conservative Party not only in name but in substance. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether a continuance of Union Government is possible? That is a matter as to which other parties have something to say. The hon. member for Parkdale (Mr. Mowat), who is not in his seat to-day, also suggested that we should have a continuance of Union Government. I wonder where the hon. gentleman would fit in under those circumstances? The hon. gentleman's observations recall to my mind the report, published I think in the Toronto Globe, of a meeting in that city at which he was nominated some two years ago. Speaking from memory, because I have not the report at present before me, the meeting was a joint one of Liberals and Conservatives in the riding of Parkdale. This very question of the continuance of Union Government came up for discussion, and there appeared to be some doubt as to who should be the candidate for the riding. The hon. gentleman's name was advanced as a candidate, but in view of the hon. gentleman's political antecedents, there was apparently some misgiving. Finally an old Conservative spoke up and said: We will accept him, (Mr. Mowat), but let it be understood we are only borrowing him

for the occasion. When the election is over, and when we revert to party lines again we do not want to keep him any longer, and we will return him to the Liberal Party again. I wonder what our good Conservatives friends in the constituency of Parkdale will say if Union Government is continued and what they will do with their borrowed friend. In this matter, I am not here to speak for the Liberal Party, and although we are a democratic party and even though in the case of a man who has sinned, it is sometimes possible to wipe away those sins and make him white once more. What, let me ask, is going to happen to my hon. friend provided the Conservatives who took the stand to which I have alluded, declare they are going to have nothing more to do with the hon. gentleman, and they return him from whence he came?

I did not rise with any idea of speaking at great length or of discussing such questions as the tariff and the rate of exchange. But when my hon. friend (Sir Thomas White) offered advice as to what would be the proper course to pursue in future with respect to Union Government I did not feel like letting the opportunity pass without drawing attention to the fact that the hon. gentleman's own political course has not always been one of marked steadiness all along the line. We are told in one breath that the country is prosperous and that we have great financial resources at our disposal and in the very next breath when it comes to adequately recognizing the claims of our returned soldiers and maintaining soldiers' widows and dependents the statement is made that it is absolutely impossible. The hon. gentleman also tells us that Union Government must carry on but he shakes himself clear of any and every responsibility in regard to it. He declares that it is the duty of the Prime Minister to carry on and to assume great responsibilities, but the ex-Finance Minister himself refuses to shoulder his share of the burdens to be borne. Along with all other members of the House I deeply regret the condition of health of the Prime Minister. We all have a very high regard for that Rt. hon. gentleman; we deplore the reasons for his absence from the House, and we sincerely trust that the reassuring statement with respect to his health made a few days ago may turn out to be well founded. We all want to see the Rt. hon. gentleman remain in good health but would he not be endangering that health by again assuming the responsibilities of office. Personally I would like to prevent any pos-