

Motion Respecting House Vote

prodding the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) into that fatal move last Monday night. Outside the house the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. MacEachen) said the Minister of Transport started the prodding.

Despite the Prime Minister's utterances outside the house about a plot, the Minister of Finance responded to prodding on that Monday night. For the Prime Minister to charge a plot is ridiculous. That is a most dishonest approach, especially when one considers what the Prime Minister had to say when he returned to the house. As I remember, his opening remarks were that there had been no collusion. That statement does not tie in with what he said to the Canadian people about a plot.

They tried their best to prove that the hon. member for Cumberland (Mr. Coates) had made this statement. A tape was made; that tape was taken to the Prime Minister's office and checked, and they found that the reference to the plot was not what they were looking for, so they did not push that. They went back to the house and said there was no collusion. But there was collusion outside the house, by their own admission. The hon. member for Villeneuve (Mr. Caouette) explained before a television audience that the only conversation he had held with a minister of the government was when he bumped into one in a television studio. Yet in the press the same day the Prime Minister was reported as saying that the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Martin) had talked this matter over with the hon. member for Villeneuve. There is collusion, Mr. Prime Minister, and you are up to your neck in it.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member must address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Mr. Speaker, there is collusion and the Prime Minister is up to his neck in it.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): The right hon. gentleman seems to think this matter is rather amusing. It is not amusing when we think of the state of affairs he has brought about and which we have witnessed in this house the last few days. It is not amusing when we consider what has happened to an hon. member of this house. It is not amusing when we examine what the right hon. gentleman's own supporters and ministers are doing.

It is my understanding that the Liberals, especially those who are running for the leadership, are under instructions to keep their mouths shut. They have been told "Don't get into this debate; keep your noses clean". There was a row about the fact that the Minister of Finance was the only candidate to get into this debate. Hon. members opposite are fighting this issue among themselves, as they are fighting many other issues among themselves.

It must be interesting to the Prime Minister to read the only speech made by a Liberal member in this house yesterday, in the course of which he expressed the hope that the new Liberal leader would bring about true Liberalism in this country. What are the ministers of the crown doing? They are criticizing the leadership all the way. Take the Prime Minister's seatmate, his old friend the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Jack Benny of the Liberal party. What has he had to say about the Prime Minister's leadership? In Halifax he told Nova Scotia Liberals that what the Liberal party needs today is strong leadership. If that is not a reflection on the present Liberal leadership, what is it? It is bound to be a reflection on the Prime Minister. I could go along the line and pick out contradictions by each and every one of those ministers opposite, one against the other.

Not long ago we were witnesses to one of the most unusual spectacles we have seen in this house in a long time, certainly since I have been here, when we saw two Liberal ministers standing up in this chamber and taking opposite sides on a vote. Yet the Prime Minister talks about unity and solidarity within the cabinet. Mr. Speaker, they have been split down the middle a dozen ways for the last five years.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs is not the only party member who has been talking about the leadership. And while I am speaking about the minister for external affairs let me point out that he is now obliged to go to the convention bearing the cross of an alliance with the Cr ditistes. Despite what his tactics may have been before this particular development, the fact that there has been collusion between the Liberals and the Cr ditiste party is a cross which he will not be able to carry to the Liberal convention and survive; and this cross has been placed on his shoulders by none other than his old friend the Prime Minister. With friends like that, who needs enemies.