

February 20, 1871

the right of the Canadian Parliament to be consulted previous to the action of the Imperial authorities.) He maintained that the leader of the Government had no right to say that he would send home by the next mail a measure which might not be approved by this House, to be converted into an Act of Parliament which would be irrevocable. The House had a right to know, and he insisted that they should know, and have an opportunity of formally deciding upon the prudence or imprudence of the action of the Government. They had suffered enough from past blunders and mistakes with reference to this North West Territory, and Parliament must take to itself the responsibility devolving on it. What they had done in the past they might to a certain extent revoke, but what might be done by the Imperial Parliament was irrevocable. If the Hon. Premier did not submit the measure to this Parliament he (Mr. Blake) would follow up this motion by another one by which he would test the sense of the House on the question.

Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD believed the despatch to be transmitted to England would meet with the approbation of the House and of the country. The one doubt he had was a technical one—whether Government could properly place on the table here a Bill which was to be laid before the Parliament of England. If he found that it was one of that nature, the communication itself and the answer would show in every respect what the measure was designed to be, and the hon. gentleman would have an opportunity of bringing up the question if the scope of the correspondence did not meet his views or the views of this House. At any rate the whole substance of the Bill, excepting the mere wording of it, would be laid before the House.

The motion was carried.

Mr. MACKENZIE wished to know in what state the reports of the Departments were at present. If they were brought down at an early day it might save hon. members the necessity of moving for so many returns. Last year and the year before there was much annoyance and hindrance to the public business caused by the delays in bringing down departmental reports, especially the report of the Post Office Department.

Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD said tomorrow he would state when the Post Office Department reports could be brought down.

Hon. Sir GEORGE-É. CARTIER: The Report of the Militia Department will be ready within ten days from this time.

Hon. Mr. LANGEVIN: The report of the Public Works Department will be submitted in a few days.

Hon. Mr. MORRIS and Hon. Mr. TILLEY replied to the same effect for their departments.

Mr. YOUNG asked when the report of the Minister of Agriculture would be ready.

Hon. Mr. DUNKIN: At an early date.

Mr. MACKENZIE: If any report of the Intercolonial Commissioners would be brought down.

Hon. Mr. LANGEVIN replied in the affirmative.

The House adjourned at 5.25 p.m.