

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, November 7, 1873

The **SPEAKER** took the chair at 3 p.m.

Prayers

Many of the members had changed their seats. In the front row on the Opposition side were Right Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald, and Messrs. Langevin, Cameron (Cardwell), Mitchell, McDonald (Pictou), Pope (Compton), Bowell, and Carling. Messrs. Tupper and Gibbs occupied seats on the second row. The members of the new Ministry were, of course, out of their seats, so were also Messrs. Tilley and McDonald (Antigonish). In the front seats on the Government side were Messrs. Holton, Huntington, Wood, and Cauchon.

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PROROGATION

The **SPEAKER** read a letter from His Excellency's Secretary, informing the House that His Excellency would proceed to the Senate Chamber and prorogue the House at four o'clock this afternoon.

Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD said: I hear that announcement, and it is not unexpected. Not that I had any intimation before, but I suppose perhaps that would be the course taken by the incoming Government, and I am glad to find that there can be a prorogue without a breach of privilege. (*Opposition cheers.*) I am glad to find there will be no shouts of privilege on this occasion, because there is to be prorogation, but before that prorogation takes place, I have to remind this House that there is a British subject in the custody of this House, by order of this House, and we have got to see that justice is done to him. He ought to be brought to the Bar and be allowed to make his explanation. I move that the Sergeant-at-Arms bring Mr. Heney to the Bar.

Hon. Mr. HOLTON: Mr. Speaker in the absence of the gentlemen who are now responsible for the conduct of the public business of the country, I can only say I hope the right hon. gentleman will not persist in the motion he has made. It is quite impossible I apprehend that the House can proceed to judgment in this case without a previous examination of Mr. Heney, who has been summoned to our Bar, and possibly of other witnesses.

It is impossible that this examination can take place anterior to the hour that His Excellency has informed us that he will prorogue the House, but that prorogation will work the discharge, for the time being at least, of Mr. Heney, and the manifestly proper course is to

let him be thus discharged until the House meet again, and shall then determine what course to pursue, whether to proceed with the investigation that must precede a judgment, if an intelligent judgment is to be arrived at, or whether to proceed in the summary way now proposed. In less than half an hour more Mr. Heney will be discharged from further attendance upon this House until you resume your seat after prorogation. I can conceive, therefore, no reason whatever for consuming the brief space of time which will elapse before we be summoned to the Bar of the Senate. I had supposed the right hon. gentleman would have waited until after the ordinary routine—the reception of petition, which is the first privilege of the subject—before making this motion. I am bound to say that he intimated no intention of making this motion. I had intended following the routine proceeding of the House, to make the authorized statement respecting the formation of the new Administration.

I trust, therefore, that the right hon. gentleman will consent to the withdrawal of his motion, since the object he has in view, namely the present discharge of Mr. Heney, will be reached. He, surely, is not in the position to argue that there is no foundation whatever for the charge that is brought against Mr. Heney he, surely, is not prepared to invite the warped judgment of this House upon the matter which he pronounces to be one of very great gravity, and therefore, Sir, I do hope we shall proceed with the dignity befitting the occasion, and not attempt to have, perhaps, an acrimonious debate for a few minutes upon a subject respecting which it would be impossible to reach a conclusion.

I shall however, to guard myself against the possibility of any course that might be taken by hon. gentlemen opposite, and while I have the floor, proceed to discharge the duty towards the members of the Administration not now in their places with which I have been charged. I have to inform you, upon the authority of Hon. Mr. Mackenzie, who, I have been informed, was charged by His Excellency the Governor General with the duty of forming a new Administration, consequent upon the retirement of Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald and his colleagues.

I say I am instructed by that hon. gentlemen with the duty of informing the House that he has extended the Commission entrusted to him by His Excellency the Governor General (*loud cheers*), and I have to submit to the House the names of the members of the new Administration, which are as follows:—Hon. Mr. Mackenzie, Minister of Public Works; Hon. Mr. Dorion (Napierville), Minister of Justice; Hon. Mr. Blake, member of the Privy Council without a Department; Hon. Mr. Smith (Westmorland), Minister of Marine and Fisheries; Hon. Mr. Letellier de St-Just, Minister of Agriculture; Hon.