

continues to hold office and exercise its functions. It may have to make vitally important decisions, both in domestic and external affairs. It might have to decide the question of peace or war. Where does it get its authority? Not from the House of Commons, for there is no House of Commons; the old one is gone and the new one has not yet been elected. Nor from the electorate, for the electorate has yet to pronounce. The case is particularly clear if, as not infrequently happens, the old House was dissolved because the Government had been defeated in it. This was the position of Mr. Meighen's Government in the summer of 1926, after its defeat in the House on July 1.

(2) If, as in Britain in 1834, December 1905, and October 1922, or in Canada in November 1873, a Government resigns without having been defeated in the House or at the polls, the new Government takes office without any authority from either the House or the country, and can claim no authority from either till it has been upheld in the House or at a general election.

(3) If a Government has secured a dissolution and comes back in a minority, it may decide to retain office till the new Parliament can meet and pronounce judgment. During that period it can certainly claim no authority from either the House or the electorate. This was the position of Peel's Government in 1835, Melbourne's in 1841, Derby's in 1852 and 1859, Palmerston's in 1857, Salisbury's in 1886, Mr. Baldwin's in 1924 and Mr. King's from the end of October 1925 till January 1926.

(4) If, as in Britain in 1783 and 1807, in Quebec in 1878 and 1891, and in British Columbia in 1896, a Government undefeated in the House is dismissed, the new Government takes office without any authority from the House or the country, and can claim no such authority till it has been upheld in the House or at a general election. This case is unlikely to arise under modern conditions, but cannot be