

on the people, far in excess of the requirements of the country. In this House the right hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce and his friends on the other side of the House claimed again and again that there could be no greater crime or blunder on the part of the Finance Minister than for him to overestimate and to take from the people of the country an amount greater than was justified by the requirements of the country. Here we have been told that the surplus in the treasury is \$15,000,000 or \$18,000,000. Why take this amount of money from the people? Why not leave it in the pockets of the people? Why not estimate what the requirements of the country are, and if you overestimate the amount should only be slightly in excess of what you actually require. It is a mistake on the part of the Finance Minister to take from the people more than is required or is estimated for I have heard the fault condemned again and again by members of the government. In conclusion I must say that we hope for a better day. There is going to be an election, perhaps this summer, and we hope that the people of the country will remember those who have proved false to their promises and will be true to those who have carried out every promise they have made and reward them according to their deserts.

Mr. T. CHASE CASGRAIN (Montmorency). Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the government on the new policy which they have inaugurated this session—the policy of silence. I may tell them that I have seen this policy carried out before under different administrations and it has always proved the presage and omen of their downfall. I hope the omen and presage will be the same this time as it has been in the past. The right hon. leader of the government (Rt. Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier) was good enough yesterday to occupy himself for a short time with what has passed lately within the ranks of the Conservative party. The right hon. gentleman is curious to know what is going on in the internal government of the party to which we belong and he was even kind enough to say that in the province of Quebec there is no more a Conservative party, there is no more a programme of the Conservative party and that there is no leader of the Conservative party. I would like my right hon. friend to direct his attention to what has taken place in his own party. We can conduct the affairs of our party, but I would like to inquire as to what has passed within the last five or six months within his own party. I would like to know whether the breaches that have existed in his own party have been healed. Everybody knows that when the hon. member for Montreal, St. Mary's (Hon. Mr. Tarte) left the administration the important question was put to my right hon. friend as to

Hon. Mr. HAGGART.

whom he would take from the ranks of his own party to replace the hon. member for St. Mary's. We still have in our minds the deputations of senators, of members of parliament and of influential men who were sent to Ottawa from the important city of Montreal and from other parts of the province of Quebec to protest against the entry into the administration of, or to confiding of an important portfolio to the gentleman who now occupies that position, the hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Hon. Mr. Préfontaine). I would like to inquire from my right hon. friend whether these gentlemen have been satisfied. When the right hon. gentleman looked around him within the ranks of his own party in the province of Quebec it appeared as if he could find nobody in whom he had enough confidence to give the important spending department of Public Works which had been vacated by the hon. member for St. Mary's and it is within the remembrance of everybody that when the present hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries went before his electors in the county of Maisonneuve he had to make the distinct promise and declaration that he was authorized by his leader to say that within a very short time an important part of the Department of Public Works would be confided to him. The election took place. This pledge which my hon. friend made—I am sorry he is not in the House now—to his electors, this promise, has not yet been implemented. There was a rumour last fall of an impending general election and that rumour took some consistence while the House was in session. What did my hon. friends do? They passed a statute chap. 53 of the statutes of last session which provides that.

The Governor in Council may at any time transfer the management, charge and direction of any public work, or any power, duty, or function with respect to any work or class of works whether public or private, which is assigned to, or vested by statute in, any minister or department, to any other minister of department; and from the date appointed for that purpose by the Governor in Council, such power, duty or function should be transferred to, and vested in, such other minister or department.

This was done for the purpose of making the people of the province of Quebec believe that within a very short time an important part of the Department of Public Works was to be transferred to the control of the hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries, and to implement that promise, that declaration, that pledge which that hon. gentleman had said he was authorized to make when he went before the electors of Maisonneuve. May I inquire of the right hon. leader of the government whether that promise made to the electors of Maisonneuve has been fulfilled; whether an Order in Council has been passed under the statute of last session and whether my right hon. friend has now enough confidence in the hon. Minister of Marine and Fisheries to