

impossible; and that he wished to force a negative is equally impossible. It is an error of judgment, in my opinion. If it had been left to the Council separately, it would have left Honourable Members more at liberty to consider the question freely. I was, in common with other Members, carried away in admiration of the outburst of oratory of the Honourable Member. But there was an allusion—a warning. It is said that it was not a threat; but there was talk of shouldering muskets, and of blood and bloodshed, as if that was the proper way to get civil rights. I protest against these threats, these turgid speeches which oppress the ears of those who wish to listen to argument and reason. As to the opposition of the Government Members, it arises from no dislike to the system on the part of the head of the Executive. Responsible Government interposes a barrier between the people and the Governor, which is most useful to the Governor. I say that we are not in a position to take advantage of Responsible Government. If the country thinks it necessary or desirable, what is there to prevent our getting it when we choose to ask for it? The Honourable Member for New Westminster himself told us that the Imperial Government were always ready to step in, and yet he hints at violence and disturbance. When the Honourable Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works proposed a Resolution last session, which was seconded by myself, with respect to a change in the Constitution, asking for a Council with a majority of one of representative Members, Honourable Members said we don't want the change, and voted it down. If we had secured this, we should have been a step further in advance than we are in constitutional progress. I say we must hesitate before any body constituted as this Council is can pass resolutions of such a nature. Any such resolutions ought to express the full and deliberate opinions of the country. As to the special merits of Responsible Government itself, it is hardly necessary to argue it here at such an inopportune time. I shall, therefore, merely say that I think it totally inapplicable at present to the circumstances of British Columbia, where population is so sparse, and lies at the circumference of a circle which contains an area of 300,000 square miles, and where representation is so difficult that the form suggested would be the most expensive that could be adopted, and instead of preventing agitation, will be likely to increase it. Much of the population is alien, and, in any case, this Council is not the proper body to pass upon it. If, however, the country is of a different opinion, they can say so at the polls, and there is no power can prevent their getting Responsible Government. But, I would ask, what makes the system so particularly attractive to Honourable Members who advocate it? We are told that it is solely because it will be good for the Colony, but there is no attempt to prove the proposition that has been set up. Another thing strikes me as coming with a very bad grace from those who support this recommendation. It presupposes a distrust of Canada, and assumes that men of the large experience of Canadian statesmen, and so reliable as they are, are not to be trusted to yield to a general cry from the country for enlarged representative institutions. I don't think that this is the time to go into the question. I say, then, that whenever Responsible Government is wanted it can be had. I need hardly refer to the position of official Members in this matter. The terms already passed by the House, so far as this question is in any way connected with Confederation, leave the officials free to express their opinions. I must, myself, vote against this recommendation, and I press upon the Honourable Members to do the same, in order to prevent the complication of the terms with any such irrelevant question.

Hon. CHIEF COMMISSIONER—I must endeavour in as few words as possible to state the position of the Government Members upon the subject now before the House. I fully understand that it was imperative upon some Hon. Members to bring forward this question of responsibility at some period of the present session, having advocated it by speech and pen as the specific remedy for the ills that the Colony was labouring under. Consistency demanded that the question should be brought up by them for discussion; it was a logical necessity. Inexorable fate, I say, impelled certain Hon. Members to advocate Responsible Government. I had, however, hoped that the Hon. Members who advocated it would have reserved it for separate consideration, instead of bringing it up as an amendment to this clause now under consideration. [Mr. Robson—"No, not an amendment."] Virtually it is an amendment. If this clause had prescribed that any future alteration in the constitution should have been dependent on Canada, then I could see the desirability of Hon. Members on the other side of the House taking exception to it; but as it is I confess I am at a loss to comprehend their position. Although, as I said inexorable fate compelled Hon. Members to bring the subject