

Hon. Mr. DAVIES.—The hon. member for Charlottetown has stated that the reason the late Administration delayed the Election was in order to ascertain what action the Home Government intended to take on Confederation. This is a very extraordinary excuse to offer. Did they suppose or desire that the Imperial Government would force us into Confederation? The British Parliament would not be so independent as to sanction such an act. We are as independent a nation as any of the States in the neighboring Republics, and our independent rights cannot properly be taken from us. But the British Government never wished to coerce us into Confederation. Those who held up this idea, were the men who wished that this Island might be legislated into the Union without the people's consent. The Home Government could not rightfully deprive us of our separate Government, unless we had violated the constitution of the Colony. And I believe this is the late Government attempted to impress upon the Home authorities, when they sent for troops to quell what they represented to be a disturbance among the tenantry, thereby bringing the Island into discredit. To state that the late Administration delayed the election was not known whether this Colony would be included in it or not, is as much as to say, that they believed the Legislature of this Island to be a farce, and our constituents not a free people.

Mr. BREKEN.—Mr. Chairman, I agree with the hon. member for Belfast, that it was not at all probable that the Home Government would take away the Constitution of the Colony without our consent. But the Government did not know what instructions His Excellency might, almost at any moment, receive. He might have been instructed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to dissolve the House, and test the opinion of the country on the question of Confederation. Suppose that he had received such instructions a week or two after the Election was over, would not the country have thought that the Government of the day had been too hasty in making an appeal to the people? I am just as prepared as the hon. member to stand up for the rights of the Colony; but considering our insignificance, I cannot admit that we are so independent of the Mother Country, as he has asserted. The object of the late Government, he also stated, seemed to be to bring discredit, or a stigma upon the Colony. This was caused, he says, by their sending for the troops. The Tenant Union disturbances, are no doubt looked upon by him, as a very trifling affair. He did not condescend to inform us whether he was a member of that organization or not; but I know, Sir, that when a procession of that body paraded the streets of Charlottetown, they halted opposite the hon. gentleman's business establishment, and gave him an oration. He appeared at the door before them, and received the honor with a countenance radiant with the smiles of patriotism. I am not going to detain this hon. committee at present to discuss the point whether the nature of the disturbances which arose, out of the great Tenant League agitation, were such as to justify the late Government in sending for troops. I will merely say that if the hon. member for Belfast sincerely believes that their action in the matter was intended, or calculated to bring the Colony into disrepute, he ought, now, since he is a member of the Government, to have introduced a paragraph into His Excellency's speech, to carry out the objects of the Tenant Association which he countenanced and supported. A little pepper in the speech would have been an improvement. I was not at the hon. member's elbow through his election campaign, but I have been informed that the League had not a little to do with his presence here. If then, Sir, he owes his seat in this House to the influence

of that organization, why has he not something in his Address on the subject, even supposing he could not procure a place for it in the speech from the Throne? I fear, Sir, that having ridden into this House on that political horse, he has turned him then, and is now riding to the end of the next away, however more to be heard of, until the next Election day comes round. I can only compare his conduct to a man who has undertaken a long journey on foot, and finding himself fatigued, and almost despairing of reaching his destination, he meets with a horse which he coaxes with a little present, and then turns him adrift. So is the hon. member with the Tenant organization; he gave it a few political oats, and encouraged it to help him along, but having served his purpose, he has now quietly forgotten its claims. He may declaim about the troops and the acts of the late Government, but now, after having become one of His Excellency's sworn advisers, he will discover that he must pursue the same policy in maintaining law and order, as was adopted by the Conservative Government of the late Government, and the troops are to be party. It is rumored that the British troops are to be withdrawn from the other Provinces after they are confederated. If so, those which are here will also be called away. Should the hon. member for Belfast, then ascertain that law and order can not be maintained in this Colony, except at the point of the bayonet, he, I think, will conclude that we are not so independent as he at present imagines.

Hon. Mr. DUNCAN.—The subject of the Tenant League having been brought forward by the hon. member for Belfast (Mr. Davies) one of the members of the Government, it is, Mr. Chairman, no harm for the Opposition to mention it. The conduct of my hon. colleague in regard to the Tenant Association is, I think, somewhat strange. In fact he has merely used that body as a means of getting into power, and even in his canvass before the late Election, he regulated his speeches in regard to the Land Question and the rights of the Tenantry very much by the character of the people whom he happened to be addressing. He should not, I think, have alluded to this question at all, and I wonder that he has done so. But, Sir, returning to the paragraph under discussion, why did not the present Government, if they desired to call the Legislature at an earlier period, wait a few weeks before appointing their principal officers from the members on the floor of the House? Could not some of these appointments have been postponed until the House had risen, and thereby no delay be occasioned? But the Address throughout follows the policy of the late Government—that policy which the present Government at the late Election found so much fault with, but which now they appear ready to carry out. I, for my part, Mr. Chairman, see nothing objectionable in this paragraph, but am surprised at my hon. colleague's allusions to that organization as a means of getting into the Government, and that he will now have no further use for the tenantry until he again comes upon them at another Election.

Hon. Mr. DAVIES.—I wish, Mr. Chairman, to make a few remarks regarding the defence of the hon. member for Charlottetown, with respect to the action of the late Government in dissolving the General Elections. The objection which was made that had certain news come from England regarding Confederation, the House would never have been called. This is but a poor defence of the action of the Government, and is equal to saying that its members were willing to sell their country and prove traitors to the trust reposed in them. And is not the party carrying out the same policy still? Have not the Opposition chosen the hon. member