

plated. But I must say that I can understand that my hon. friend is very anxious to know in advance if there are to be any changes made in the Bill. I think, judging from past experience, my hon. friend will think it important to know in advance what is to be the precise character of the Bill when it shall come to the second reading. I presume—and in so presuming, I think I do not state anything that is not in accordance with the truth; if I do, he will correct me—and I have reason to believe, that he is preparing some batteries to attack this Bill; and, perhaps it is important for him to know at this time whether he should place his batteries on a certain hill or place them on another hill. I can understand that my hon. friend is anxious to know whether or not the Bill is to be as it is. If there are to be other provisions, as a matter of tactics he would like to be in a position to judge whether his batteries should be placed in one place or in another. But I can hardly give myself the pleasure of coming to the rescue of my hon. friend by giving him to-day information to which, in due time, he will be entitled.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. May I say one word to my right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier): Whatever else I do I shall not retire within the lines of Torres Vedras. Might I respectfully suggest to him that he has not at all answered the question which I put to him, namely: Why did he so far violate constitutional usage as to bring down a Bill as the act of the administration when two members, who were on the eve of return, had not been consulted in regard to it. That is the point, the chief point, of my remarks.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN (South York). The right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) has given no explanation as to the questions put to him.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Mr. Speaker—

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. I intend to move the adjournment—

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The House is to be moved in supply in a moment, and that will give the hon. gentleman (Mr. W. F. Maclean) an opportunity to speak.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. The right hon. gentleman had the opportunity to speak, and so had the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden) and I claim the same privilege of discussing the matter at the present stage.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. In order to keep myself within the rules of the House, I intend to conclude with a motion. The right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) has made a statement that does not meet the point that has been raised. He has been asked to explain why he introduced legislation in this House dealing with the auto-

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nomy of the Northwest without having the approval of his colleagues. And he tells us that he does not intend to appoint another Minister of the Interior at the present stage and to consult that minister in regard to these Bills. We heard the other day about autocracy in this House; but what about the autocrat of the present occasion? Not only has he got rid of one minister, but he intends to go on with this question without calling to his cabinet a new Minister of the Interior. Apparently, he does not care to consult the opinion of the west in regard to these things. But surely the west is worth consulting. Surely the new provinces of the west are just as well entitled to be consulted in this matter as are some other provinces. But every stage of the right hon. gentleman's conduct is on unconstitutional lines. I think the Prime Minister is constitutionally bound to tell us whether one of his colleagues had not objections to the financial phase of the Bill that has been brought before the House. We are supposed to have a Minister of the Interior especially charged with the affairs of the west. We have a Minister of Finance who is especially responsible for the financial program of the government. Yet we have this autonomy measure involving grave financial charges, and giving reason to all the other provinces for demanding better terms, and the Finance Minister (Mr. Fielding) so far as we can gather, has not even been consulted, as the Minister of the Interior was not consulted. Where are we to end, if these things continue? And let us refer to another minister. I spoke of this matter the other day, but it should be mentioned in this connection also. We have a gentleman acting as Minister of Public Works who is putting through estimates for \$10,000,000, and will probably have supplementary estimates for \$3,000,000 more. The amount will depend on the political exigencies of hon. gentlemen opposite. Last session this gentleman was in the same unconstitutional position, and then put through estimates of about \$10,000,000. And yet this unconstitutional method is to be continued, and when explanations are asked none are forthcoming. There are more governments in trouble than this one. If you read the papers to-day, you see that nearly every government in Europe is in trouble for some reason. But there is a cure; there is a solvent for these difficulties; and that is to consult the people. If the right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) believes in the principle professed by his party, he will not carry on the negotiations that are now going on in the way of fights and bickerings in his own cabinet, but he will do the constitutional thing and go back to the country and submit this question to the people. He has confessed to-day that he is afraid to open the constituency of London, in Ontario; he is afraid to open a constituency in Manitoba, and bring in a