

cause the public had been made to believe that government was no longer possible, and that Confederation was the only means of settling our difficulties; but I believe that that opinion has greatly changed since the Ministerial explanations have been made public; for every one expected, and it was everywhere asserted, that amendments would be made, and that we should be informed as to the nature of the local governments, and as to the debt of Lower Canada. (Hear, hear.) With these few remarks, Mr. SPEAKER, I shall conclude by saying that I shall vote against the resolutions in order to carry out and to comply with the wishes of my constituents. (Cheers.)

MR. J. J. ROSS—I propose, Mr. SPEAKER, that the speech of the honorable member should be printed in pamphlet form, apart from the official debates, and that several thousand copies should be struck off to be distributed freely throughout the country. (Hear, hear, and laughter.)

MR. BIGGAR—As the resolutions on the Confederation of the Provinces are looked to with a very great deal of interest by the country, I think it necessary to make a few remarks in explanation of the vote which I intend to give. But before doing so, I think it necessary for me to state, as briefly as possible, the position that I hold toward the present Government, as also the two governments that have preceded them. In my canvass in 1861, I most distinctly and unhesitatingly stated to my constituents that I had no confidence in the CARTIER-MACDONALD Government, who were then in power, as I considered that they had managed the finances of the country very badly, and had, by their extravagance, brought us to the eve of bankruptcy; and that if I were elected to the House as their representative, I should feel it my duty to vote want of confidence in that Government, if such a vote was proposed. In 1862 the Militia Bill was introduced by that Administration. Believing that some legislation was necessary in that direction, and admitting the principle of the bill, I voted with the Government on it. Some of my political friends, with whom I was then acting, found fault with me for the course I then took and the vote I then gave; but I am happy to say that they have since been induced to take the same view of the matter that I did at that time, and they would now be willing to go a little farther in the same direction than I would perhaps feel it prudent to go with our

great public debt. It is gratifying to me, however, to find that the course I took on that occasion has been approved of now by them. That Government was defeated on that vote; and when the new Government was formed, known as the MACDONALD-SICOTTE Administration, I was not satisfied with their policy. I had promised my constituents that I would support representation by population, and vote against separate schools; and as that Government proposed to make representation by population a close question, and to bring in a Separate School Bill, I felt that I should have to vote against them when representation by population would be moved as an amendment to the Address. I accordingly voted for the amendment; and when Mr. SCOTT'S Separate School Bill was introduced, I felt it my duty to vote against it, in accordance with the pledges I had made to my constituents. That Government was defeated, and a new Government was formed, in which I advised you, Mr. SPEAKER, and my friend the late Hon. Postmaster General, to take office. I stated to you, Mr. SPEAKER, and to the Hon. Mr. MOWAT, that I would not advise you, as my friends, to take office, unless I would feel it to be my duty to support you; and that if the question of representation by population was again moved as an amendment to the Speech from the Throne, I would vote against the amendment, and that I would go before my constituents, as a general election was approaching, and state what I had done, and if they did not sustain me in what I had done, I was quite willing to remain at home. I believe that Government did right in resigning when they found they could not carry on the business of the country in a satisfactory manner; and when the TACHÉ-MACDONALD Administration was formed, I decided to give them a test-vote, but I was willing that they should proceed without any opposition from me, if they could control a majority of the House; but when the reconstruction took place, I felt that I could not be a party to a government of that kind—that the demoralizing influence of a coalition such as that Government contained would counteract all the good they could ever do, and that the alliance was an unhappy one. (Hear, hear.) I was not willing, after having voted a want of confidence in them on the 14th of June last, for having misappropriated one hundred thousand dollars of the funds of the province, to come down to the House eight days after and say