

Commons, but on the council board of a nation. And if this large portion of the Dominion has no voice in the council, surely it is deprived of a portion of its undoubted rights. I find that two-thirds of the area of this Dominion is not represented at the council board, and that at the very time when a most important question, one vitally affecting the interests of that country, is about to be decided. One of the provinces to-day has almost been driven into revolt, if we can believe what we read in the newspapers. I refer to the province of Manitoba. The absolute refusal of the rights of that province to have its boundaries extended, the absolute refusal to do its claims justice when these new provinces are being created, has irritated it to such an extent that its government has threatening to resign as a protest against the conduct of this administration. Are we not then face to face with a very serious crisis?

A great question is now before us for determination, namely, the establishment of two new provinces out in the Northwest Territories. What ownership shall these provinces have in the soil? What representatives shall they possess? What legislative power shall be given them? What interference shall we make with what they believe to be their undoubted rights in the future? All these great questions are being discussed by this parliament, and these Territories have no voice at the council board. They had a voice there not long ago, but their representative resigned as a rebuke against the high-handed and unwarranted conduct of the government on the Autonomy Bill. A Minister of the Crown, representing that country, gave practical expression of his dissent from that policy by resigning his portfolio. Under the circumstances, it certainly is the duty of the government to fill that portfolio at the earliest possible moment and have a united cabinet on the policy which they are submitting to parliament. Why are they not acting in accord with the principles of constitutional government? Why do they not appoint a minister and let him go before the people, so that the people may have an opportunity of endorsing or condemning the policy of the administration? The reason, Sir, is evident. They dare not do it. They want to force the Bill through without giving the people chiefly interested an opportunity of declaring their will regarding it. They refuse to respect the sovereign rights of the people. They are acting in utter disregard of the great electorate which can make and unmake parliament? Are they afraid to appeal to that power? I am justified by their conduct in coming to the conclusion that they are afraid to trust the people.

Then, are we not justified in raising our voice in rebuke of the conduct of the government? Are we not justified in calling public attention to that conduct as a violation of the principles of constitutional gov-

ernment under which we live? We should clearly be doing less than our duty if we refrained from inviting public attention to the present condition of affairs. As I have said, it is clear that the government dare not allow the people to speak, to signify their agreement or disagreement with the measure now before the House. At best, the representation of the Northwest in regard to this measure could only be indirect so far as the cabinet is concerned. The people of the Northwest Territories sent their Prime Minister, their accredited representative. Except for this delegate they are represented only by a few members in this House whose voices are but little heard. The government has acted in a most high-handed and tyrannical fashion in its treatment of the rights of the people of Manitoba and the Northwest.

Now, when a member is selected for the cabinet, he is selected on two grounds—his fitness for the position and the locality he represents. And who is to determine his fitness? First, the Prime Minister who chooses him. But the judgment of the Prime Minister must be endorsed by the people, for, according to our constitutional forms, a minister, on his appointment, must go before the people to be endorsed by them. Have the government dared to appoint a minister and so seek the judgment of the people on their policy? They have not. This policy was not before the people in the last election, and so there has not been the opportunity for the people to express themselves upon it. The only conclusion that we can come to is that the government are afraid of the people and dare not take the step of appointing a minister to fill the present vacancy because the effect of that would be to give the people an opportunity to express their opinions upon this important measure. The financial interests of that great country in the Northwest are involved; their whole future is involved. Yet, they have no one in the cabinet to speak for them or determine their rights,—the people of the Northwest must go into the 'Blind pool' to which the hon. member for Edmonton (Mr. Oliver) referred last year. Yet, the Prime Minister declares over and over again that he admires the British constitution and tries to follow it. His conduct, in my opinion, is the very reverse of all that; he violates every principle of constitutional government by the course he pursues. He acts like the Czar of Russia, deliberately against the people's rights and wishes. The people are given no opportunity to determine what their legislative rights shall be with regard to their property, their financial relations to the Dominion or any of the other great questions involved in this measure. And their accredited representative, their Prime Minister, is spurned when he comes here and seeks to speak on behalf of his people.

The conduct of the government is a direct

Mr. SPROULE.