

tures set out in money bills. We are certainly within our constitutional rights in what we are doing now.

The allegation that Liberal senators should be bound by the actions of the House of Commons falls into exactly the same category. This is a matter within the Liberal Party, but we are an independent house, and the fact that I am a Liberal senator in no way means—

Senator Flynn: A Liberal-controlled house.

Senator Hicks:—that I have to agree with the actions that were taken in the other place. Senator Flynn, I am sure, will agree that I have, on several occasions since I have been in this place, voted against government measures when I felt it was right to do so, and I shall continue to do so. On this occasion, I am entirely in agreement with what my colleagues are doing.

Senator Flynn: Of course.

Senator Hicks: The last statement that Senator Flynn made was that what the Liberal senators are doing constitutes a dangerous precedent. Not so. The passage of this motion and this bill under the present circumstances would be a very dangerous precedent, a precedent not before seen in our parliamentary history.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Senator Hicks: For this reason, honourable senators, we are insisting upon a sound parliamentary principle and practice, and we shall continue to insist upon it. Hence, we will not support this motion.

Hon. Heath Macquarrie: Honourable senators, Senator Hicks has, I hope, set a trend for shorter speeches for the rest of the evening. I am going to try to emulate him, at least with respect to the quantity of the remarks that I pass.

I have listened carefully to this debate today and, while at times it has been enjoyable, there have been times when I have had intimations of unreality coming in upon me. I am not quite sure where in fact all of this is leading. As I listen to the contributions of the members of the other party, I am unclear as to what they want.

I hear now that the production of the main estimates will bring about a profound transformation of judgment—judgment based upon not just what is in the bill but on the most profound views as to the value of the second chamber.

I have been on the Hill for 28 years and I have heard those heavy tomes drop 28 times, and I have yet to see them bring about the claimed transformation—the intellectual thunderbolt that I have heard referred to several times today.

I have noted, especially this evening—a very poor time for people to be making speeches or to be listening to them—a concern about threats.

My usually genial colleague, Senator Murray, has become a *bête noire*. He has been making terrible threats, acting like a fierce dragon; a terrible man so it has been said.

He, of course, can look after himself, and always could. But I think that there has been some abandonment of realism in honourable senators saying that the course being pursued by

[Senator Hicks.]

the majority of this chamber is not one that is bound to arouse bitter public criticism.

We all know that people have written of, and hoped for, Senate reform for years and years and years. I have had to put a new shelf in my library to accommodate all of the reports dealing with Senate reform. Everybody knows what to do with it. Some people think that if senators were elected, everything would be great. I say that with both houses elected, you would really have confrontation. In any event, we will see about that.

As Senator Roblin mentioned in his excellent speech this afternoon, there is danger in this for the Senate.

What do you suppose the public of Canada will think, and will say, if this non-elected body carries out a course of non-action that costs the taxpayers of this country millions of dollars—

Senator Haidasz: Not so.

Senator Macquarrie:—at a time when they are deeply concerned about economic issues.

Senator Hicks, in his very concise and excellent speech—wrong in some ways, of course, but a good speech—quoted the British North America Act.

If one looks at the British North America Act, one will find that this Senate is one of the most powerful second chambers in the whole world. But we know that in reality it is not.

The Senate has preserved itself. It has survived. It has survived because always there were people with sufficient wisdom to stop it from moving into the formal area of its powers; always, there were people with sufficient wisdom to keep it within the realm of common sense.

In the Speaker's Chambers there are some Latin inscriptions on the wall, one of which is *sapere aude*—dare to be prudent.

And I would invite the Liberal majority, with all of the muscle that it can flex—and I read Senator Frith's comments about these threats—to dare to be prudent, to dare to be wise.

Someone said earlier today that he doesn't care whether the Senate is abolished. I do care—not that I will personally be here all that long and not that I do not realize that the Senate can get along without me, but because it is a body that should not be foolishly altered, and certainly not abolished.

As its changing status is undertaken, it should not result from a hasty act of obstruction, such as the present one—and I use that word advisedly.

We talk about prudence and we talk about wisdom; but one of the essential elements of wisdom is to know something about timing.

What a time, as Senator Murray mentioned, for the non-elected body to take on the elected!

● (2120)

Robert Borden used to say to Wilfrid Laurier, when the Liberals were scuppering the legislation of the government of that day, "You will stand up and say that you are not bound by the House of Commons and make great statements about independence, but you will bind yourself to the minority of the House of Commons. That is what you are doing." However,