

those hon. gentlemen may be so disposed, although I very much question it with respect to my right hon. friend the leader of the Government after the experience of a few days ago, when this measure was introduced, and when advantage was taken of an old rule with regard to moving the previous question. That was an invasion of the rights of a member, the leader of a party; that was an invasion of the rights of the people and party whom he represents, and it may occur again. But the point I desire to make is that such rules should be adopted as would give and preserve to the representatives of the people their rights and privileges, and that it is a matter of right that we claim, not a matter of grace. Many things are to come up during the present session of Parliament. There is the question of the Intercolonial railway; we have had experiences in the past—and I have no doubt we shall continue to have such experiences—with regard to land and franchise grabs; we shall have subsidy applications by the score, and, before the Governor General dissolves Parliament, supplementary estimates and resolutions with regard to railway and other subsidies may be brought down at the closing moment of this session when there is no time for consideration, and when, with addition of closure, the people of the country through their representatives will have no opportunity to scrutinize, to object and to protest. They will not have the privilege of scrutinizing in detail the items of supply that may be brought to the notice of this Parliament—a right which they have always enjoyed in the past. There are many other matters which may come up for consideration. The high cost of living is certainly a live issue in this country today; the very mention of the subject is pregnant with thought and with conjecture as to the causes of that condition and the methods of affording a remedy. Special privileges are being asked for by various interests before the committees of this House day in day out, session in and session out. We have under consideration by a committee of this House the Bank Act, a measure in which the people of this country from ocean to ocean are taking the deepest interest, but by the adoption of this resolution the people's representatives will not be afforded an opportunity of protesting against any iniquities which they may see lurking within the folds of that Act. There are many other economic questions likely to come up, but under the provisions of this resolution the free speech of the people's representatives can be curtailed; their liberty to express their opinions can be muzzled, and a great wrong may ensue with respect to any of these questions that may suddenly come up for consideration

during the dying hours of the session. We may well ask what constitutes the state. It is not merely the territories involved; one of the greatest factors in the constitution of a state is the preservation of its constitutional rights. We defend our land as against invaders, but the danger is not from assaults from without, but from internal assaults that may be made from within when least expected. The curtailment of the privileges of members of this House of Commons makes possible iniquities that could under our present system be avoided. I cannot protest too strongly against this resolution, against its spirit, against its object and against its consequences, in so far as I can foresee what those consequences will be. I have said that it is practically a rule that may be utilized to buttress and entrench a corrupt and corrupting government; it may be utilized to protect looting of the treasury, to cover up fraud, to prevent inquiries, and the exposure of irregularities. Under the system hitherto prevailing in this Parliament, that was not possible; we have had evidence of that time and again in the course of preceding parliaments. By this resolution liberty will be dethroned, freedom abridged and free discussion stifled in Canada. No longer can we boast of being the freest of all peoples. What is truth, asked jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer. That is a scriptural quotation more correct, I trust, than was the quotation of the Minister of Finance. That question was asked two thousand years ago and he would not stay for an answer. We ask it to-day and the leaders of the Government and the members of the party behind them will not stay for an answer. They go out of the House when an effort is made to propound the truth to them. They keep out of the House and are silent with respect to the truths that are being uttered. I could not use language too extravagant to express all that I feel with regard to this resolution. I am not in accord with the Government in respect to its policy of centralization in connection with naval affairs but I most unhesitatingly say, strong as are my feelings against that measure, my opposition to this proposal is infinitely stronger, because it undermines the very foundations of the people's rights in matters of the government of Canada in this twentieth century. I have entered my protests against the resolution. They are uttered with conviction and sincerity. I realize that they may be uttered in vain, I realize that partyism has taken such a strong hold upon hon. gentlemen opposite that there will be no staying the tide that is rushing us on to this iniquity. But I do say that a day of retribution must come. This matter