

had it suited the political purposes of this government to dissolve parliament without notice at any time since November 17? This tax would have been in effect. This robbery would have been going on.

Mr. MARTIN: This government would have been returned.

Mr. FLEMING: Parliament would have had no opportunity of dealing with it, because this government would have dispensed with parliament. Did I hear the Minister of National Health and Welfare say something?

Mr. MARTIN: We would have been re-elected.

Mr. FLEMING: If the Minister of National Health and Welfare has learned so to despise the intelligence of the Canadian people that he can believe the Canadian people would re-elect a government which has trampled the constitutional rights of Canadian citizens into the earth, then I say to him that he ought to be ashamed of himself for making a statement like that in the house. For my part, I prefer to believe that the Canadian people are blessed with intelligence, and have determined to see that their rightful freedoms and constitutional rights shall not be stolen from them by a government that has ceased to be responsible to the people.

An hon. MEMBER: Louder.

Mr. MARTIN: Have you seen the latest Gallup poll?

Mr. FLEMING: I have only to say to my quibbling friends opposite that I would recall the example of one Charles I and others, people who indulged in the great quips they thought were so good in their palmy days. I say in all seriousness to the Minister of Finance or any others such as the Minister of National Health and Welfare who has just come to the rescue of his colleague—

Mr. ABBOTT: Thank you.

Mr. FLEMING:—that one of these days, as we survey the political remains of these ministers, we shall be saying, "Alas! poor Yorick; where be his quiddities now?"

Yes, Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Finance thought to make a virtue tonight out of the fact that when he made his radio speech parliament had received notice that it was being summoned to meet. Apparently the issuance of the proclamation by the government calling parliament to assemble, so far as this government is concerned when it suits its purposes, is treated as just the same as parliament being in session. Well, a pro-

clamation of the kind that was issued at the end of October last calling parliament to meet on December 5 is not immutable. These proclamations are frequently issued and withdrawn. It would have been completely within the constitutional powers of the government to withdraw the proclamation summoning parliament to meet. They could have done that simply. It has been done before. Where would we have been then, Mr. Chairman?

Where would have been the virtue that the Minister of Finance sees in having made his radio announcement a few days after a proclamation had been issued summoning parliament; because that proclamation had no effect as binding the government to proceed to meet parliament on December 6?

I have indicated what the passing of the resolution and the passing of the bill to follow will mean in terms of condonation of the most grievous assault upon the constitutional rights of Canadians that has been delivered at any time in our history. Go back to the days before responsible government, when people who called themselves Liberals in those days were fighting the battle for responsible government in Canada, and you will not find anything in the actions of the governors in those days who did not consider themselves responsible to the legislature, to compare even faintly with the studied disregard of the rights of parliament that this government has shown so contemptuously all the way through this piece.

Mr. MARTIN: Louder.

Mr. FLEMING: I would speak louder if I had any hope at all that words of wisdom would penetrate the skulls of some hon. gentlemen on the opposite side.

The hon. member for Vancouver-Burrard tonight sounded a word of warning to all hon. members as to the effect that will follow the creation of a precedent in this matter. If this parliament condones what has been done here—for condonation it certainly will be if parliament passes this resolution and the bill to follow—you are simply opening up the flood-gates to more assaults upon the constitutional rights of men and women in Canada at the hands of this oligarchical institution yonder that calls itself a government.

Is there not one private member sitting to your right, Mr. Chairman, who has a little left of his asserted devotion to the principles of liberalism, who has a fragment of appreciation left of the importance of these great constitutional safeguards, who will rise in his place and speak on this question? I challenge any private member on the government