

wan by terrorizing the homesteaders of that province. And let me point out that the homestead entries in western Canada are decreasing, not increasing; and may I suggest that the preaching of the doctrine that a man shall hold his homestead only as he votes for the Government of the day must necessarily have an important influence in producing that effect. They undertook to coerce the electors of the constituency of Macdonald by the aid of the provincial government, prostituting the processes of law, arresting without warrant, holding without trial and publicly threatening wholesale arrest and detention. I ask you, what difference is it to the men in Macdonald whether they were arrested by order of the party boss or by order of the Czar?—the result was the same. They laid a tax on the lumber of the settlers in the name of the law which the courts have said was contrary to the law. They juggled with the customs duties on cement and steel rails at the proper time to affect elections, but not long enough to substantially relieve the people. It is admitted by the minister concerned that his department handed out to party friends without notice to the public of any kind property of this country to the amount of \$100,000. They defied all precedents of constitutional government and all decency in public life to influence the federal election in Richelieu and the provincial election in Antigonish.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would remind the hon. member that the resolution before the House relating to the rules of the House, and would direct his attention to the rule with regard to relevancy of debate.

Mr. OLIVER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask you for some leniency, for this reason. The resolution is placed before the House in such a form that there is no possibility of introducing amendments to the resolution that would bring out the reasons that could be brought to bear against its passage. The supporters of the resolution on the Government side admit that this resolution is a restriction on debate, but they ask this side of the House to trust the Government not to exercise that authority unduly. I am pointing out to the House that the Government, by reason of its record, is not entitled to that trust, that their actions, so far as they have gone, do not warrant this House in reposing trust in them.

I wish to say that to the charge solemnly made in this House that a member of the Government was elected by flagrant conspiracy they refused consideration by their majority vote, on the ground that the question was one for the courts; yet to-day, by order of

Mr. OLIVER.

Parliament for which this Government and its majority is responsible, a citizen of Canada, a British subject, accused of no crime, lies in the common jail in this city of Ottawa, because he refused to disclose his private business that was then, and still is, under consideration by the courts. The Government has introduced a Bill to spend \$35,000,000, and refuses to give information to the House as to the policy or as to the details of the proposal.

Closure is not a blow at the Opposition of this House, it is a blow at the rights of the people of Canada represented in this House. The possibility of bringing his wrongs to the attention of Parliament has been the great protection of the homesteader of the West. Establish closure as it is proposed to be established by the resolution before the House, and the reign of terror begun in the Saskatchewan election becomes the normal condition throughout the three prairie provinces. And what is the effect in regard to the homesteader is not less the effect in regard to every citizen who is unfortunate enough to have direct dealings with the Government of the day. No such conditions ever prevailed in Canada even in the palmiest days of Toryism as it used to be. Then there was regard for precedent, for personal reputation, for free discussion, there was power to force a dissolution; but to-day, precedent is ignored, personal reputation is disregarded, discussion is gagged and dissolution is defied. Machine politics on the American plan is established; we have Toryism triumphant at last.

I suggest that this proposal to gag Parliament for the purpose of enabling the Government to put through a measure that they are either unable or unwilling to justify or explain to the people of Canada must look strange to the people who have recently come to our country; they will wonder where they are to find the liberty, the justice and the fair play that they looked for under our constitution. I ask you, are we likely to inspire appreciation of and reverence for the ideals of British liberty, British justice and British fair play by preventing the representatives of our people from giving free expression to their views in a free parliament? I say this resolution is a crime against liberty, and an offence against Canada and against the Empire; and all the greater because it is committed under the pretence of British precedent. The conditions here and in Britain are not parallel, the terms of the closure resolution are not parallel, none of the reasons which require closure there exist here. The attempt to shelter the establishment of boss rule in Canada, according to the American practice in its lowest form, behind the need