

per of the people throughout this country. If he is absolutely sincere, and I do not doubt that he is, and if the Government desire to get information as to the temper of the people of Canada, I have a suggestion to make: There is in this country, a constituency known as North Ontario. There is another known as Glengarry, there is another known as Assiniboia, and unfortunately another in the city of Quebec. Two of these constituencies have been disfranchised for almost a year. I would suggest to the Government, through you, Mr. Speaker, that they bring on the by-elections in these constituencies, and I think they will get some indication as to what the people think.

Moreover, this House has not met for a period of nine months. That is altogether too long an interval between sessions of Parliament in a country that claims to have democratic institutions. I believe that, especially in war time, the members of this Parliament should be more frequently called together in order that they may give to the members of the Government the benefit of their views and advice. A fabled character of old received renewed strength whenever he touched earth; so might the Government of this country more accurately determine the wishes and the feelings of the people whose servants they are supposed to be by calling together in Parliament the representatives of those people.

I was interested a few evenings ago in reading upon the screen in a theatre in this city these words: "In days long ago, when men wore long hair, narrow trousers and narrower minds, there were placed upon the statute books many laws which have never been repealed." I thought to myself: surely history repeats itself. They must have had a Union Government in those days, because, Sir, we have laws on the statute book, placed there by virtue of Orders in Council, which, at least four months after the termination of the war, ought to be repealed. They are now obsolete; there is no longer any occasion for them. In fact, this Parliament might very well consider the repealing of the law which gave those powers to the Government, the War Measures Act.

What I am now going to speak of has been already dealt with at length, but it is something that should be mentioned again and again, because eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. That is the return of responsible government. We have a shackled press. Even Parliament can be gagged, because there was an Order in Council—I do not know whether or not it

[Mr. Euler.]

has been repealed—under which the Speaker of the House might strike out of Hansard anything which he did not desire to have inserted in that publication. I am quite sure that our Speaker would do nothing of that kind, but the power is there, and it should not be there.

An innumerable number of publications, indiscriminately selected, were banned by Order in Council. I know whereof I speak, because I made inquiries in the matter and some of those of whom I inquired did not even know the nature of the publications which had been placed upon the proscribed list. Men were forbidden to use that strongest weapon which they have for their own protection, the privilege of striking. Free speech was not permitted at public meetings.

Another thing that I would like to mention, which, perhaps, will not meet with the approval of the House, is this: I am not a socialist, but I do not believe that it was either wise or fair to restrict socialist publications and the right of free speech as they were restricted, so long as the members of the organizations in question confined their discussion and propaganda to constitutional means and deprecated the use of violence in bringing about that which they desired to obtain. I do not think that that is wise. You cannot cure a sore merely by covering it; you simply drive the infection farther in, the whole system is poisoned, and the trouble will re-appear in aggravated form later on. If these men were allowed to meet and conduct their activities in a proper way, surely the Canadian people would see any fallacies if any characterized their views, and the evil would correct itself. If, on the contrary, they are suppressed, the result is what has often happened before; suppression merely aggravates the evil; it does not cure it.

Some of our magistrates—this may not be the direct result of Orders in Council, but I believe it is the direct result of the spirit that has been engendered throughout Canada by the arbitrary action of the Union Government—have convicted innocent men—I have called them "two-by-four magistrates"—absolutely without evidence and without giving them an opportunity of defending themselves or being represented by counsel. May I also express the view—it may not meet with favour on all sides, but I believe it to be the correct one—that there should be no law now, and never should have been, under which the man who obeyed his conscience so far as military service was concerned was sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. I do not see