

population of forty-five or fifty millions of people, has but one House, and all business of local or international concern is dealt with by that Parliament. Some amendments have been made to the rules with a view to bringing about, not what this resolution is intended to do—to stop the freedom of speech of the people of Canada by their representatives with respect to a certain question—but to provide for and facilitate the despatch of public business. In this country we have a population of seven or eight millions of people, and, in addition to the central Parliament, we have nine legislatures, whose function it is to attend to local and provincial business; to say nothing of the municipal councils, which take charge of a large portion of the local business of the country. And, apart from this fact, the conditions with respect to the rights and privileges of the minorities in this country are different from what they are in Great Britain. Hon. gentlemen opposite have said that the United States Congress has adopted closure. Can you compare the Congress of the United States with this Parliament? The President and the members of Congress are elected for a term of four years, during which they can do anything at all they wish, and the administration of the day cannot be forced to go to the country. What is the consequence? With every change of administration, the whole civil service is thrown out, and a new one put in, with all the unfortunate consequences attendant upon such a condition. The hon. Postmaster General has said that this Parliament is elected for five years, and that there will be no general election within that period of time. It is true that this Parliament is elected for a period of five years, but that is subject to any appeal which may be made to the people by the leaders of the administration, and subject to the will of the people as expressed either by themselves in public meetings or by their representatives in the House. Many parliaments have been dissolved within a very short time after their inception. The Government of Sir John A. Macdonald was elected in 1873 by a large majority, and four months afterwards another election was held, and Sir Alexander Mackenzie was placed in charge of the Administration. In the provinces of Quebec, from Confederation until ten years ago, the average existence of a Government was a year and a half or two years. And why? Because the people of the province of Quebec, after the elections had taken place, voiced their opinions to such an extent that the leaders of the Government realized the necessity of appealing to the people, and, if the circumstances warranted, coming back with a fresh mandate from the people. If the present Government think

they can do it, let them go to the people and come back with a fresh mandate from them. Under such conditions, and after such expressions of sentiment on the part of hon. gentlemen opposite, I say the refusal of the present Government to go to the country is their own condemnation. If they think they can get a mandate from the people, why do they not go and get it? We on this side of the House are willing to run the risk.

There are many things in connection with this matter with which one might deal, and I have spoken at much greater length than I had intended, but I hope that before the end of the week a better and wiser counsel will prevail in the mind of my right hon. friend the Prime Minister. My hon. friend the Minister of Public Works seems to be very seriously considering the situation, and, as he claims to be able to win elections, let him advise the Government to allow this Parliament to retain the conditions which are essential to the liberty of speech of its members. After having promised to do what I have advised them to do, let the Government ask the balance of the Supply for the year and we will give it to them and let the Minister of Marine, if he has found the ships that were recommended by the Admiralty in 1911, obsolete before they were contracted for, ask the Admiralty to give him new plans and then open a shipyard in St. John, Halifax, Montreal or Quebec; and let him start right away to build ships and we will vote him \$15,000,000 or \$20,000,000 as he wants it for each year's work until the \$35,000,000 is expended. Let him be courageous and be Canadian and he will have our support.

Mr. E. B. DEVLIN (Wright): In view of the extraordinary action of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Mr. Hazen), in proposing the previous question to the resolution introduced in this House by the Prime Minister last week, it would be idle further to discuss the matter. If no amendments may be proposed to a resolution, a motion or a Bill before the House, words are altogether useless, and this is a case where we are in this position, that a Government majority sets down a rule for the House to follow, tell us we must adopt it, and then coolly asks the House what we think about it. While I do not feel disposed to discuss this at length, I wish to say a few words in order that the public may appreciate the circumstances surrounding this extraordinary procedure on the part of the Prime Minister, the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, the Government, and their supporters. The rules which govern us in this House regulate the conscience and the conduct of the members of this House, and we are in the ex-