

*Procedure and Organization*

I shall now refer to the committees system. The hon. member for York East (Mr. Otto) is in his seat, and it is very appropriate that he is. I want to say a few words about him. I sat on the drug prices committee. The committee asked for witnesses to be called. They never were called, some experts wrote a letter to the committee, asking to appear. Strictly speaking, they should have appeared before us. Witnesses were sent an invitation to attend, but the invitation was so worded that they could not possibly appear before us. The invitation told them not to come, but at the same time invited them to attend.

The hon. member for York East told us that no amendments were permitted in committees. He said that government members on committees did not change things because they had their orders. This is what happened in the drug prices committee. Not one amendment was accepted. The legislation came back to the house without amendment although there was a great deal of criticism in committee. The Liberals were silent on that occasion. Hon. members can read this in *Hansard*. Not one Liberal member raised objection, although they were in the house to voice their opinions and complaints.

• (4:00 p.m.)

When the members of the other house saw this bill, they said they required expert witnesses because the members in the House of Commons had not done their homework. They called witnesses.

It is very revealing to note that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) did not accept any amendments to the Criminal Code bill from the floor of this house. He said it had been through the committee and we had to protect the committee system. He said that any bill that had gone through a committee should not have changes made to it in this house. How can this government function? Government members receive their orders from the Prime Minister not to make any changes to a bill in a committee. I am not saying this happens in every committee because certain members may not comply with all the orders, but it did apply to that committee. Then, the Minister of Justice said he would not accept any amendments and refused to consider any in the Languages bill.

How can you ever assess how competent this government is because they cast doubt upon themselves. The Minister of Justice said that the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner) had presented an excellent amendment. The minister spent the dinner hour

[Mr. Rynard.]

going over it, but said there were some things in it that possibly we should not consider because they might defeat the purpose of the bill. Ten or fifteen minutes after the Minister of Justice said what a fine amendment it was, the Secretary of State (Mr. Pelletier) said it was a terrible amendment; that the member for Crowfoot did not know what he was talking about; that it was such a stupid amendment he could not have read the bill.

How can a cabinet like that function? How can we be expected to have confidence in them? We have been very co-operative with this government. We have allowed legislation to pass. We were nice to them but, now the pay-off is the Guillotine.

**Mr. Crouse:** We sat extra hours.

**Mr. Rynard:** As the hon. member has stated, we even sat extra hours. The government would not divide the omnibus Criminal Code bill. Instead, they penalized the conscience of members and forced them to talk until they were understood. They could have divided this bill, but they refused. What would they do with closure when they would not even divide the omnibus bill to allow certain members who had conscientious feelings about parts of that bill to vote on individual sections? The government is asking for closure, the last thing in the world we want to give them.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Rynard:** That is not all, Mr. Speaker. I will now deal with another item. I wish to draw attention to a statement of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Basford). Every morning the Prime Minister has four chaps in his room to decide what the government is going to do that day. I will not mention their names. They are the "thought factory". They not only lead the cabinet, but lay down the rules about what is going to be done. It is a mystery how those fellows stay together in cabinet. How do they get anywhere with their divisive views? The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs said the price of beef was too high, boycott it. The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) said the price increase was the greatest thing that could happen, the farmers were entitled to it.

On many occasions I have quoted the leader of the New Democratic party (Mr. Douglas) because I thought his speech was extremely good. He said that if this situation were not sad it would be comic, or something to that effect. That is about the size of it. Are they jokers? Are they playing games or what are