

*Standing Orders*

As most hon. members are aware, for three years I served as Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons. That was during war, when we were dealing with the war appropriation bills, which concerned nearly all departments of government and which dealt with billions of dollars. During those years we spent three or four months on that bill alone. One of the things I cherish about those years is the wonderful co-operation I received from every section of this house. One day a member of the Progressive Conservative party thought he had been harsh with me, and before we adjourned at six o'clock he came over and said, "Joe, I am very sorry." I replied, "Don't be sorry. I know what you said came from the head, not from the heart." It was always a surprise to me that under our rules we could get through our sessions during the war years in five, six or seven months. If hon. members had not tried to play the game and to abide by the rules it would have been possible to spend the whole year here.

Of course we all realize, as the public realize, that to be elected in our own constituencies we must have something of the gift of the tongue, we must be able to express our sentiments. On every measure that comes before this house there is the natural temptation for each of us to get on our feet and speak. You can readily realize what would happen if we followed that impulse. We all understand that a certain amount of individual and collective discipline is necessary on the part of hon. members. This afternoon the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) mentioned party discipline and referred to the whips and so on. I can tell the hon. member I have been here for over a quarter of a century, and I still have to hear from the whips any directive as to how I should vote on any matter. I say that very sincerely. After all, we are free people when we come here. We are the masters of our own actions and only responsible to our electors. At the same time I am sure the hon. member and his own leader realize perfectly well that unless a certain amount of direction is given within all the parties the result will be chaos, not only within the party but in our whole parliamentary system in most of our activities. So I hope such charges will never again be levelled, because I cannot visualize a single member of this house being a servile servant either to a whip or to his own party and I never heard of a whip using undue pressure.

At the same time there is need for a certain amount of co-ordination, and I speak very feelingly on that score. At times measures

brought in by our own government are not very popular in some sections of the country. I will always remember one budget a number of years ago, when Mr. Ilesley brought the Canadian dollar to par. That was a blow to the gold mining industry of my section, as it was a blow to the constituency of the hon. member for Timiskaming. It would have been easy for me to vote against my own party on that measure, but I knew that in bringing the Canadian dollar to parity the government was doing a thing which was good for Canada as a whole; and when I received a mandate from my people it was not to represent just my own constituency but to represent the whole of Canada, because this is a central house for Canadian politics. So we went into our constituencies and told our people that though the measure was going to hurt a fine industry, at the same time it was better for Canada and the Canadian people as a whole. As a result we were never criticized on that score, as our constituents understood the situation.

I repeat, and I address myself particularly to the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, that there is no such thing as trying to make slaves of us as far as the party is concerned. That would not be Canadianism; that would not be any part of the Canadian system. I do not believe he ever tried it in his own party, and I think that statement applies equally to other parties in this house. We are free men representing free people in a free parliamentary institution. If parliament should decide to pass this resolution I believe it would solve most of the problems we are facing at the present time; it practically means the implementation of all the changes that we intend to make.

I repeat that if everyone wanted to speak on all subjects it would be utterly impossible for parliament to finish its work within twelve months. It is not fair for members to say that they must speak on all occasions, because if this was done the work of parliament would never be done. For instance, only last Friday that fine newspaper the *Montreal Star* mentioned the fact that after the minister had spoken in the debate on national defence, there were no spokesmen from the Liberal side. To some extent there was an insinuation or a criticism of this party. I cannot believe, as some members say, that the opposition members have a greater obligation than the members on this side. After all, we also have a responsibility towards our constituents and to this parliament. If we wanted to use mathematics as a basis, which cannot be applied to any parliamentary system, it would be possible for us on this side to speak as often as the members on the other side.