

Procedure and Organization

have adopted it, like Australia, New Zealand, India or England, for example.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in the United Kingdom which is rightly considered as the model or the mother of all parliaments, they have realized long ago that there are only 365 days in a year and that in the course of any debate there comes a time when a decision must be taken and when the rules must be applied.

And in the British parliament, the closure rule is not the same as ours and is even more drastic. It is often applied without raising a general outcry.

In this case, the government will be able to plan a legislative program and at least expect it to be considered and adopted if necessary.

Mr. Speaker, I conclude my remarks by quoting from a statement made by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) in December of last year:

We must not refuse to make the necessary adjustments and improvements in our institutions. For it is true that parliament and each of its component parts are, like living organisms, subject to the universal law of life: adapt or wither away. It is not sufficient for us merely to cherish this heritage as if it were a relic, of interest only to historians. We must reform it so that in our time it will serve us well. We must revitalize it so that our successors will receive from us, not an outdated, moribund survival from an earlier age, but a vital and responsive institution of democratic government.

[English]

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker—

An hon. Member: Speak up, we cannot hear you.

Mr. Woolliams: Well, Mr. Speaker, I have not got started yet, but I know you fellows have patience. Let me refer first of all to the remark made by the chairman of the committee, the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Blair) to the effect that he was a senior member of the university from which we both graduated. Well, we young fellows, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and myself, can appreciate that when we get to his age we see things through different eyes.

I believe the first question I should ask tonight is: what are we doing here? After all, the government said it would run parliament according to a timetable, and that we would adjourn on June 27. We are here, Mr. Speaker, as my hon. friend from Fundy-Royal (Mr. Fairweather) said, quoting from the *Citizen*, because the government thought it could put something over on the opposition

[Mr. Forest.]

parties by rushing these proposals through, anticipating that members of the opposition would want to go home for their holidays, like some on the opposite side whose empty seats we see here this evening.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Woolliams: I hope those who are in their places tonight will realize that they have underestimated the opposition.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Woolliams: Let me say that we intend to stay here to oppose these proposals, and if we have to stay here all summer, we intend to do so.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Woolliams: Our party intends to do so, and after listening to spokesmen of other opposition parties in the house I have the impression they intend to do the same. I might say here and now to all those who want to write articles about a filibuster that if this place does not close until October 8, when it is supposed to open again, it will not cost the taxpayers one more dollar, since the cost of this institution is identical whether it is open or closed. We are really travelling on our own time for the sake of preserving for the people of Canada this living institution, namely, parliament.

In my introductory remarks I should like to say I was shocked that this proposed new rule, which is 16A in another form, should have been introduced into this particular parliament. I have sat in this institution since 1958. Many in this chamber have been here even longer than I have. But there is one thing on which I believe we can all agree: none of the parties ever had more responsible leadership, whether it be the Official Opposition or the N.D.P. or the Ralliement des Créditistes.

It would seem to me that having regard to this kind of leadership—and I refer, now, in particular, to the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), a reasonable man—this is the wrong time at which to come to parliament and try to ram down our throats a proposition of the kind now being advanced.

This country has called for responsible leadership for a long time. Whenever we got into prolonged debates in the past our actions have been called irresponsible. Now that we have responsible leadership throughout the whole house—and this is no criticism of any