

illogic of some of our procedures? We say we maintain these rules and procedures because of tradition. That is a lot of nonsense. We are more British than the British. The British change their ways, but we do not. This is like being more Catholic than the Pope.

It seems to me that subjects such as this should not be debated during private members' hour. Private members' hour is a time when we should be able to bring forth good ideas. When I had my 40 bills covered, 38 on one subject, at least one of my reasons was to show how stupid these regulations are. Another reason was that we must use every means at our disposal to bring a good idea before this House. This is almost impossible to do. As other hon. members have said, whenever a member comes forward with a good idea, it is talked out.

• (5:50 p.m.)

I remember an occasion when I had a good idea which had a good deal of support in this House. It had to be brought forward in a way in which it could receive a little more attention. Another idea I put forward during private members' hour was that our flag be presented in this House of Commons. There again it was a matter of a young upstart coming forward with an idea which nobody had thought of before, and therefore no attention was paid to it. That particular question is one which I am sure would receive the approval of just about every member of this House. I refer to the placing of the flag of Canada in the House of Commons, as is done in the legislatures of other countries.

This idea is now away at the bottom of the list, where it will remain, never to be discussed. Such a suggestion should not have to be made in the form of a private member's bill. It could be done without a private member's bill. If Mr. Speaker wanted the flag in the House, he could have it put in. But oh, no; this is an idea originating with a young upstart who has been here only two years. I believe it is time we changed our rules, because some of us are becoming fed up with this situation and with some of the snide remarks that are made when one attempts to take the bull by the horns. I am fed up, and there are many other members who are fed up. I suggest it is time the few people holding the reins in this Parliament decided to take the bull by the horns so that discussion might be opened up on some of these ideas. Something certainly should be done about the basic rules of this House so that they might be more meaningful to the individual member.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce): Mr. Speaker, I enter this debate merely to support the motion put forward by the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin), and the remarks made by the hon. member for Cochrane (Mr. Stewart). I do not want to talk out the motion, and therefore I shall sit down right now if I have the assurance of this House that the motion will be permitted to come to a vote.

An hon. Member: Then sit down.

Public Bills

Mr. E. F. Whelan (Essex): Mr. Speaker, as members do we have not the right to grant unanimous consent to this bill maintaining first place on the list? I think it is too important a subject for a member having to stay seated in order to not take up time discussing it. I remember what I went through in an effort to have a private member's bill discussed in this House. If we can have unanimous consent, I shall not say anything further.

Mr. J. A. Jerome (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, for perhaps 4½ minutes let me add my views to those already put on the record. As I indicated earlier in my question, the particular aspect I wish to discuss for a few moments concerns the powers of the Committee on Procedure and Organization to explore the rules of this chamber. I particularly address myself to hon. members who participated in this debate and spoke about the subject of reform of the rules of this chamber, because that indeed was one of my major objectives in coming here as a new member in 1968.

I felt very honoured indeed to be appointed to the special committee which sat during the first session of this Parliament under the very capable chairmanship of the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Blair). That committee worked very hard during long hours. The sponsor of this motion was a member for the committee as was the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) who has participated in this debate.

I think any member would support me when I say that the accomplishments of that committee were numerous and very significant. In fact, the only change recommended by the committee that met any serious opposition in this House was in connection with the rule dealing with the programming of debates in this chamber. There was a very searching examination and full recommendations by that committee which brought about changes in several of the fundamental functions of this chamber, not the least of which was the approach to money resolutions and the elimination of the resolution stage which all members embraced as a worth while amendment.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question? Would he not correct that sentence? Did we not agree to some rules affecting the programming of the business, and was there not just one particular aspect about which we did not agree?

Mr. Jerome: The answer to that question is a little complex. The hon. member who asked the question sponsored a compromise position on the programming rule which set up the possibility of a decision in respect of the business of a committee of the House being made on a majority basis. One of the difficulties that has been widely discussed in this House since that time is that within the special language of the rule it does not contemplate that the government must be a member of that majority, although the hon. member has graciously accepted in the past that that was his intention at the