

the Prime Minister is only there for three days". That is true. Cabinet ministers only have to show up for one day, and you give notice to the minister about your question. You must give notice.

You do not tell the minister what your supplementary question is going to be, but you give him notice. The deputy House leader said: "How about if we had that in the Canadian House of Commons?". Then the Whip stood up and suggested the most revolutionary thing of all. I'm sorry, it was the member from Surrey, British Columbia, who suggested: "How about if every motion and every debate came to an end, not in seven days, but in seven hours as they do in some of these other parliaments". Of course that is true in Britain, New Zealand and Australia. Motions come to an end at the end of every sitting day. That is true.

But what these members did not say to this opposition was: "How about if we had the system of committees that they have in the British House of Commons? How about that system"? That is what they forgot to say. That is where the action is.

The committees are completely divorced from the House of Commons. They do not need terms of reference. They operate completely autonomously. That is where the action is in those legislatures throughout the world which have a system in place for changing their rules of procedure.

By rules I mean all of the rules. Some of our rules, as the hon. member before me pointed out, are by custom. For example, somebody bows to you, Mr. Speaker, in the chair. You often wonder why somebody bows to you. I mean, it is very unusual to have a member walking across the floor and he bows to you. He bows. You often wonder why, when the Speaker comes in, the Sergeant-at-Arms says: "Take your hat off to the Speaker". You often wonder why you cannot sit up in the gallery up there without having a tie on. You are not allowed. If a man tried to come into the House with a leather jacket on, with a shirt and tie, he would not be allowed. There are certain rules that are sometimes very difficult to understand.

Government Orders

I imagine it must be difficult for people in the gallery to understand. If they took out a pencil right now, at this very moment, and started to take notes, they would be told they are not allowed to do it in any part of the gallery.

An hon. member: Except in the press gallery.

Mr. Baker: Yes, except in the press gallery, and except a portion of the gallery here to the right of the Speaker for ministers' assistants and a section of the gallery just next to the gentleman up there who is operating the console, operating the microphones, and there is a little section where the Speaker and the guards allow somebody to take notes.

The Canadian House of Commons has been very slow to change. I suppose we have been the slowest to change of any legislature under what we call the British parliamentary system. It was only in the 1950s that women were allowed to come into the House and sit here without a hat on. Members might be interested to know that at that time when two female MPs in the House of Commons stood up and asked why it was that whenever a woman comes to this House and sits in the gallery, she must have a hat on, the Speaker in a classic ruling for the Canadian House of Commons recited St. Paul in the first epistle to Timothy.

An hon. member: Oh, oh.

Mr. George S. Baker (Gander—Grand Falls): No, no, then he made reference to the first epistle to the Corinthians, which I will not repeat here today. He made reference to those particular proclamations in giving his judgment. The Speaker then set the precedent by saying that as far as he was concerned, a woman should be able to come to these galleries and wear whatever she pleased. So that was the precedent that was set.

Mr. Speaker also in that judgment answered my question as to why people bow to you. It is because the first House of Commons was in a chapel and the Speaker's chair was on the altar. Because it was on the altar, people had to bow. They had to bend their knee when they came in front of the Speaker. That tradition has held until today in this Chamber. The tradition of not allowing anyone to take notes in the gallery stems back to when they did not want people to be sending out