

*Procedure and Organization*

its own procedures. It is parliament which makes the rules, not the government. Now we have the government asking parliament to bind and gag itself.

I suggest that hon. members on the other side think about this. If we came into this house and silently acquiesced in what I would call the mummification of parliament, we would never again be able to hold up our heads among the honest Canadians of this country. They did not send me here in order to assist the government to ride roughshod over parliament. Those who have attempted to bring in these restrictions, those who have attempted to place parliament in a strait-jacket, have used the excuse that this is the way things are done in England. I suggest it is not the way things are done in Canada.

● (11:10 p.m.)

I do not know who cooked up rule 75c, but I have an idea. Perhaps the government house leader had something to do with it, assisted by someone else who is now no longer within these walls but who is a former member of parliament. I will not go into personalities but at one time he sat as a member of the opposition.

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** That is a pretty mysterious statement.

**Mr. MacEwan:** The Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) works in mysterious ways, as well as other members of the government. Some of them are here one day and gone another. Their spirits and ghosts are here, so we know about that. The Minister of Justice should uphold justice and remember about the previous great ministers of justice of this country. The present minister should keep that in mind when his legislation is brought before the house.

**Mr. McCleave:** He can forget about his predecessor.

**Mr. MacEwan:** With regard to these rules, if the house leaders cannot agree or do not reach a conclusion which is satisfactory to the government, then a minister will have the power of life and death over the business of the house. He, and he alone, will have this power. That is a lot of power to place in the hands of one man, however modest, unassuming and solicitous of the rights of others that man may be. In this particular instance I am not referring to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) because it is definitely a terrible temptation to place before

him. I suggest that the government house leader has already demonstrated his lack of fitness to wield such absolute power over the business of this house.

There is one reflection which comes to my mind if rule 75c—to which I refer as the butcher rule—is passed, and that is the considerable saving that will ensue in parliamentary positions. For example, we will no longer require any of the opposition house leaders because in that instance the government house leader will be all powerful. Perhaps we will no longer require opposition whips. This would be a terrible thing for the hon. member for Saint John-Lancaster (Mr. Bell) because there would be no point in him coming to this chamber. If rule 75c is passed, this parliament will simply become a graveyard of free speech, and the battle, like so many battles for freedom, will be lost quietly, unexpectacularly, and with hardly a whimper. Parliament will simply become another occupied country with the government acting as the occupying power.

Parliament cannot accept the imposition of a gag by this government. Members are not sent here simply to say yea or nay. Members are sent here to complain, to criticize, to demand redress of grievances and to point out the faults and failure of the government.

**Mr. Sharp:** And to legislate.

**Mr. MacEwan:** The minister should know all about that. He has been in the backrooms of deputy ministers for so long. He has been a bureaucrat, and he has shown it in the legislation which he has brought forth here.

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

**Mr. MacEwan:** I am not sure how it is in other branches of the Department of External Affairs, but the passport branch is certainly not so good. I suggest that we need more legislation there.

However, let us go back to the consideration of rule 75c. Members are also sent here to be informed, to represent the people who sent them, to put forward the interests of their constituents, and so on. Parliament cannot degenerate into a series of seminars, with government ministers telling us what to think, what to say and how long to speak. If we are only allowed to vote and not to speak, we will be getting suspiciously close to the systems practised in countries where the state has been allowed to become the supreme entity of the nation. The issue is simple: Is the state a creature of the people, or are the