

*Procedure and Organization*

● (2:30 p.m.)

Some people do not have much hope for the committee system. I do not share that pessimism. I will be personal again and say that the Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs had developed a spirit of co-operation. Its members work with the chairman who understands their aspirations and is quite prepared to work along with them. We get along fine in that committee. That type of committee produces good results. It may be one of the exceptions.

I have great hopes for the committee system, but it will have to work differently from the way in which it has been working. The committee will have to work with much less influence from the government. The chairman cannot be either the chief protector of the government or the hatchetman. He must always bear foremost in mind the interests of the committee. It must be remembered that committees are composed of members from all parties in the house just as the house is composed of members of different political persuasions. Your Honour must protect the interests of all members, not just those of the government supporters. The chairman of a committee must represent the interests of all members of that committee.

I hope we will see some consequential changes. I hope we will have a panel of chairmen who will occupy a position in the house much greater than at present. If the government wants to do something about hatchetmen or chief defenders, why do they not employ some of their parliamentary secretaries who are terribly under-employed at the present time in that position?

All the changes that have been made over the years have been for the benefit of the executive. I suppose it is a case of always bowing before the altar or burning incense at the altar of super-efficiency, or supposed efficiency. We are now told that the Privy Council office is going to become an empire of technocrats. We are going to see what will happen to the office of the Privy Council, with parliamentary secretaries going over the heads of deputy ministers and around ministers. These stories get out, Mr. Speaker. What is being set up? An empire for the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). A presidential system is being put together. Parliament? It is only an institution that must be tolerated for the time being, but too much attention should not be paid to it.

For example, there are regional desks. Hon. members need not be listened to. Somewhere

in the field there is a man reporting to the Prime Minister. Recent negotiations in the field of external affairs have not been carried out by the officials of that department. Special emissaries not connected with the department are being sent out who report directly to the Prime Minister. The Department of External Affairs does not know what is going on in connection with these negotiations.

While all this is happening, hon. members on the government side sit back and say: Everything is fine, what are you talking about? They say that these are mere rule changes which are being introduced. They have been brought in under the aegis of the Prime Minister, and the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) is merely the instrument with regard to them. He is the chief executive officer in this abolition of the rights of parliamentarians.

Hon. members opposite are no different than I. They represent their constituencies in the same manner and have the same rights as do I. Somehow they should realize our rights are being trampled upon and we are being muzzled. What do they think is happening to them? Is their parliament going to be every Wednesday morning in caucus where, because of their numbers, each man may be limited to two minutes? What rights have they got to speak? How are they going to speak on behalf of their constituents when the power is given to the President of the Privy Council who cares not a fig for the interests of private members? An example of this is what happened to the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton. The cabinet did not care a fig for him and were quite prepared to offer him up on the altar of expediency.

**Mr. Goyer:** Do you prefer a two-leader system?

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** I challenge the hon. member for Dollard to make an intelligent speech on the subject of the rules.

**An hon. Member:** It is not possible.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** The hon. member should stand up and represent his constituents as he has an obligation to do.

**Mr. Barnett:** He does not know anything about it.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** The hon. member gets a lot of information, doesn't he? He gets it, all right! The only time he rises is when some minister or parliamentary secretary says: "Why don't you rise and ask this or