

*Proposal for Time Allocation*

held high office under the present government. This is not a light question at all. We are within our rights as an opposition in putting forward our arguments against the bill.

What are we to do—just collapse because we know that the smaller parties to our left are going to vote with the government and that therefore we cannot defeat the bill? Are we just to say, "We are going to be defeated anyway; let's give up?" This is not the purpose to be served by an opposition. If we have strong convictions on a subject under discussion we must present them. If there is a volume of opinion in the country opposed to a measure which comes before us, it is our duty to bring that fact to the attention of the House of Commons in the hope that the government will modify its bill, or postpone it, or withdraw it. That is the situation we have reached right here.

This idea that just because the government brings forward a measure the whole House of Commons should act as a rubber stamp, is something I will not accept. This is the idea behind allocation of time, Mr. Speaker. We have had the proposition put forward by the Prime Minister and by the leader of the N.D.P. that there should be allocation of time before—I wish I could underline this in *Hansard*—before a debate commences. Nothing could be more ridiculous; nothing could be more unsound.

Not until a debate commences and is carried on do you sometimes discover the peculiarities and the weaknesses of a bill before the house. I have seen this happen time and time again. For example, if we had had an allocation of time on the transport bill before the debate commenced, and had been restricted to two days in committee of the whole house, we would have had a far worse bill than finally emerged, because the amendments which poured in from both sides of the house transformed that bill. All those amendments took time to present and to be discussed. That is one of the reasons why I am opposed to the allocation of time idea.

Sir, I have made survey after survey of sessions in this house. I have put this on *Hansard* before and I do not want to keep repeating things I have said in the past. None the less it has been the case in session after session that legislation has always gone through, and gone through without much trouble except in those instances where a highly controversial bill was before the house. Over a period of 15 sessions that I have reviewed I have discovered that from 40

to 60 pieces of legislation were put through each session. On other occasions I have suggested that within the framework of 150 days to a session the house should be able to complete the major portion of its work and pass from 40 to 60 pieces of legislation if the planning is carefully done.

We are having this session one of the longest sessions in Canada's history, and one of the most poorly managed sessions in Canada's history. It is simply ridiculous to go for 245 days, as we have done in this session, running over the year, starting in January and ending perhaps in May of the next year. It is just nonsense. This session which was started a year ago last January should have ended in December. A new session should have started in January of this year, the centennial year, and we should have had a respectable and good session for centennial year. In such a year I would have kept out of the session controversial matters such as this.

I think it is a crying shame that in our centennial year we in this house are forced to put through a bill which is unsound, on which there is no need for haste, and which has brought on closure, or a restriction of speech in the house. Centennial celebration. What a farce the Prime Minister has made of parliament.

The session should have ended in December. I suggested at that time to members on the other side that although we still had before us the railway transportation bill and the unification bill we were prepared, again by agreement, to put those bills on the order paper in 1967 in the same position that they were in in 1966, if the session had closed in December, and not to go through all the committee proceedings with regard to the transportation bill, not to go through the second reading and things of that nature, but to put it back into the house in the same position as it was in in December, cut the session off, start afresh with a new speech from the throne and proceed then in an orderly fashion with supply motions and with estimates.

Look at the situation in which we are in now—245 days, talking about starting a new session some time in May, and we have the Prime Minister fumbling with regard to what we do between then and July 1. He has said that perhaps we will have to sit all July and August, and he laid out a list of legislative items as long as your arm, which will take another two years to accomplish.

In this session we have already passed 85 pieces of legislation. Obviously it has been