

Government Orders

few moments ago and that is to impute motives, because I have not said that.

At the end of the day, I think it becomes of equal importance, not only to examine the estimates, but for members of Parliament to help in the designing of policy by undertaking studies and by thoroughly investigating that policy with witnesses before committees. In the long run, I believe the emphasis ought to be placed on this.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Order, please. There are other members who want to ask questions or make short comments.

Mr. David Berger (Saint-Henri—Westmount): Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer to a comment made by the member for Crowfoot. He stated that he does not hear in his constituency, compliments about Question Period. He said that he believes we should stick to facts and not be argumentative and so forth.

I would suggest to him that is a somewhat Pollyannish way of looking upon Parliament and the responsibilities of members of Parliament. Apart from my opinion of his comment, is it not really the voters who should decide upon the performance of members of Parliament and of the parties that are represented in this House? I thought that when I was elected to Parliament I was elected to come here to articulate the views and needs of my constituents in the best manner that I am able to, that I was elected to debate and I was elected to ask questions.

Does he not agree that is the role of a member of Parliament? As he knows, the rule changes he claims to favour, which were proposed by the Conservative government, will precisely provide fewer opportunities for MPs to ask questions, to debate and to articulate the views and needs of their constituents.

I would like to ask him how he feels that providing fewer opportunities to MPs will enhance the status of Parliament in the eyes of his constituents and in the eyes of all Canadians?

Mr. Malone: Mr. Speaker, of course the hon. member is correct when he says that his role is to come here and articulate views to the best of his ability on behalf of his constituents. That is right. That is why we are here.

But the hon. member represents a constituency that is very close to this Chamber. He does not have to travel very far. Canada is the second largest nation in the world; 4.5 time zones from east to west. Constituencies are long flight distances away. One of the rule changes

will allow for a period where we can go home to be in our constituencies and to hear representations.

The hon. member who asked the question said: "Isn't he right to be able to articulate on behalf of his constituents?" I submit to him who lives very close to his constituency that he has an opportunity that I, the hon. member for Edmonton East, the hon. member for Victoria and the hon. member for Arctic West do not have, and that is to get home with the same frequency, or even mid-week for important events. We are extending an hour every day so that the period we are at home is virtually made up in debating time by the length of time we have extended the debate here.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Before resuming the debate, it is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the Hon. Member for Hamilton West—Airports; the Hon. Member for York Centre—Harbourfront Corporation; and the Hon. Member for Cape Breton Highlands—Canso—Fisheries.

• (1630)

[*English*]

Mr. George S. Baker (Gander—Grand Falls): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could add a few words to this debate.

We have in our Canadian House of Commons a procedure for changing the rules that is not present in any other legislature, as we call it. This is a legislature. In the world, that I know of, we are part of the British parliamentary system. Parliament comes from the word *parler*, to speak. This is a speak shop here.

They have a procedure set down to change the rules. We do not have any such procedure. So, we cannot as government members do in this debate. They say: "Well, how about if you had Question Period and you had the British system where there is a question from the opposition and then a question from the government". That is what they do. In every question period in the British House of Commons, the questions go to the opposition member, to the government member, to the opposition member to the government member.

The House leader says: "Why do we not have that"? Then the deputy House leader stood up and said: "How about if we had a system like they have in Britain where