

*Procedure and Organization*

always be very strongly tempted to control everything.

A majority government has control over its members. A very complex system has been established to control not only the attendance of hon. members in the house but also what they must say and do. The government should not be blamed for that, Mr. Speaker, since it is trying to ensure its survival. I do not say that not because the Liberals are on the other side; I would say the same thing if it were the Progressive Conservatives, the New Democrats or the Cr ditistes because it is so strong a temptation that one is inclined to yield to it.

Therefore, the control of hon. members, of what they say and of the introduction of proposed legislation is possible. In fact, any government, whatever its political colour, controls also the contents of the legislation, and the standing orders that have been adopted say it clearly: No member of the opposition can introduce a measure that entails the spending of money.

That means, Mr. Speaker, that members of the opposition cannot introduce money bills liable to help the Canadian people. If they did, they would be called to order pursuant to the standing orders and the tradition of this house.

So, any government controls not only its own members but also its own ministers. It may happen that one of them goes astray but he is always called back to order, and many precedents prove it. The government controls not only its members but also the legislation. It controls the spending of money and sets up the legislative program.

In fact, one can never blame the opposition for the fact that during a given session, no significant legislation has been passed. Why? Because all legislative action comes and will continue to come—and this is in accordance with the Standing Orders—from the majority government. The same holds true in the case of a minority government.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, because of the majority it holds, a government controls parliament in a certain way. What displeases me most in the house is to realize that a government is able to control this supreme institution called parliament.

Since September, Mr. Speaker, we have noted a certain change in the way that committees carry on their work. We have seen

that, more and more, the government is giving in to the temptation of controlling everything, and in particular the work of the committees.

Again last night, in this house, several hon. members were raising such questions. I was one of them, Mr. Speaker, because I believe that the work done in committee is important. That work must be carried on independently from the ministers' will, because the hon. members' work is not subordinated to the political parties. Such must be the situation.

Then, Mr. Speaker, besides controlling parliament and the hon. members on the government side, in committee as well as in the house, the government, by means of rule 75c could—if it was ever passed, and that would be unfortunate—also have control over the opposition members. It could shelve the third parties and, on that score, Mr. Speaker, I need not say that we shall never give in.

As the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre said so eloquently, we have all been elected on an equal footing. We have all received a mandate from our electors and once elected, we represent our constituents, and also the whole Canadian population.

• (4:40 p.m.)

As such, we are all equal in the house and should be treated accordingly.

This morning I had the pleasure of taking part in the C.B.C. program "*Pr sent*", with the hon. member for Missisquoi (Mr. Forest) who recognized that closure was archaic, harsh and unpopular with the population.

Though he did not say it in so many words, it meant that the government was looking for another way to control debates, to stop them when it saw fit and even to impose a time limit.

But what distresses me even more, Mr. Speaker—and I would be remiss in my duties if I did not say it, though it might hurt some people—are the statements made about the opposition. Some seem to believe in this house that the Cr ditistes are mainly responsible for the extension of our proceedings, and so on, and so forth. The government has often attempted to put the blame on the Cr ditistes.

When I attended one of the meetings of the committee on procedure and organization—I was then one of its members—I saw many sniggers and noted many hints and allegations, some of which were downright scornful. This was meant to imply that because of the unfortunate behaviour of the Ralliement