

Routine Proceedings

been an extremely sensible one and very beneficial to both government and opposition.

The legislative committees that I have been on, and I admit it has been a very limited experience, have been excellent. There have been changes made in the committees on a non-partisan basis, there has been agreement after extensive work. Witnesses have been called, and various groups wishing to make submissions have been invited. The legislative committees I have been on have been very worthwhile experiences. I felt we made some real contribution to the bill. In some cases there were no amendments but at least the public had some input which we could never have had in Committee of the Whole in this House.

I disagree with him on that point and I think that while it would be nice to think that putting bills through all stages here would somehow refocus attention to this House, I do not think that is so. I think that members who are interested in discussing a bill are here for the debate, by and large.

The suggestion that no one is here is wrong, I think. I am here hour after hour, day after day, and I love being here. I am sorry that more members do not find the same pleasure in it. I feel it is my job to be here and I enjoy being here.

I realize other members have other commitments. I do too, but I tend to do more of those at night I guess and spend more of my days here. I find it great. I enjoy participating in debate with any member, particularly the government Whip and the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader. I am always pleased with them.

The Minister of Transport is always entertaining. He has a string of jokes when he makes a speech and I am happy to be here to listen to those.

An hon. member: Does it change anybody's views?

Mr. Milliken: The hon. member asks if it changes anybody's views. I agree. The views may not change visibly in this House, but invisibly I believe they do. I think the speeches that are made here influence ministers; I think the fact there is going to be an extended debate on a clause that is unpopular forces the government to consider changes.

They will not stand up and say that as a result of the representations of the hon. member for Mount Royal, or Ottawa—Vanier, or Kingston and the Islands they are changing their views. They will not announce that but we feel that the views are changed as a result of what we do, and I think that if the hon. member looked at the schedule of bills that has been dealt with in this House for the last two months he will see there has been considerable co-operation between the government and the opposition parties with a view to allocating time among those bills to ensure an orderly transaction of business.

I think there has been excellent co-operation. There has been no closure. I believe there has been no time allocation for the last two months and I believe it is primarily because as a group we have worked together to try to provide some orderly progress in dealing with government business in this House.

We do not always agree with the business, but we recognize that the government has a majority, that it is going to force the work through in any event and we have worked together to achieve that.

I do not know why that same co-operation would not continue in committees whether or not they are televised. Certainly it did not change the committees that were televised during the past year which, in my view, worked extremely well and provided an excellent opportunity for Canadians to see that aspect of Parliament at work. I hope he is thinking very positively toward this report.

Mr. Ian Waddell (Port Moody—Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, I have a comment and a question.

I have been in the House 11 years, and because I was energy critic perhaps I have been in more legislative committees studying more bills. I went right up and down the national energy program with many bills. I am now in communication. Probably I have been amongst a group of parliamentarians who have had more experience in committees than a lot of people in the House.

Committees can be very boring, but they can be very exciting also. There are a lot of people who perform very well in committees who you do not see in Question Period in the House of Commons. I think Canadians are going to be pleasantly surprised when they see the committee work.