

*Government Organization Act, 1970*

environment, and much as I consider this to be probably the most valuable thing with which we can concern ourselves at this time, I am afraid the bill before us does nothing but provide a bit of window dressing; it looks to me as though government policy on pollution control has got into the hands of the speech writers and not into the hands of the cabinet itself.

We are being asked by this legislation to approve the enlargement of the cabinet. We know that this Parliament does not operate in accordance with the rules of democracy. It has not done so for many years. It operates more under the rules of a dictatorship. When decisions are made in Parliament they are made, as everybody here knows, on the basis of party alone. All the Liberals vote one way, and that is that. The concept of democracy, of a person casting a ballot in Parliament according to the dictates of his conscience, just does not fit. It has no place in the system. If the Liberal party does make decisions they are certainly not made in parliament; they are made in back rooms, in secret, in some confidential place where the public cannot see what is happening. This is bad enough in terms of our democratic structure. It is bad enough that no freedom is permitted to the great bulk of the members of this House because they happen to belong to the government party. It is bad enough that the interests of the constituents who elected them to Parliament are not fully represented. It is bad enough that the rules of Parliament are such that power is concentrated in the hands of the cabinet.

I know the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Perrault) has a very long interest in this matter because he used to say precisely the same things as I am saying now when he was a free member in the legislature in Victoria dealing with Premier Bennett.

**Mr. Perrault:** You read my speeches, did you? Perhaps you learnt something.

**Mr. Howard (Skeena):** No. I was not able to do that because there is no Hansard in the legislature in Victoria.

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** He did not know that.

**Mr. Howard (Skeena):** What I have been saying may be unpalatable, but it is a fact of life. The general public does not always realize this. They think there is a tremendous amount of freedom in Parliament. They do not know that Parliament operates under the authority of one person, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). That is the case not only with the present Prime Minister but with all of his predecessors I have known. In effect, it is one man rule, except when it completely disintegrates as it did prior to 1962, but that was a unique situation peculiar to the construction of the cabinet at that time. Basically, a political party under the authority of whoever happens to be prime minister, controls Parliament. Parliament does not influence the government. I know that people in the country get rather fed up with the situation. Why is it, they ask, that all we do in Parliament is debate.

[Mr. Howard (Skeena).]

For example with regard to the serious unemployment situation which exists at the present time, they ask: why is it that all you do is ask for emergency debates, and then debate the subject? The simple answer is that this is the only course available to an opposition. There is no authority in the rules which permits a member of the opposition to move a motion giving any direction to the government unless by unanimous consent, and it only takes one person to disagree—usually the Prime Minister—to prevent any such motion being put. This is the structure which has been built up over the years to consolidate authority in the hands of one person and give him a dictatorial position. It is bad enough when there is someone in office as prime minister who is incompetent and inept. But when you have a person in office who is an authoritarian, who has a dictatorship concept as to the way in which things should be run, who is rigid in his make-up—as he has said himself in his writings—the matter becomes much more serious.

What the bill before us seeks to do, as others have pointed out, is to give further authority to the Prime Minister which will prevent Parliament from operating even in the limited way in which it is operated at present, and further remove from Parliament one of its opportunities to influence government activities and purposes. Not only does the Prime Minister desire this additional authority, as though he did not possess power enough already; not only does he wish to add to the dictatorial status of his office, but he seeks even further power to control other people should there happen to be one or two in the Liberal party who might wish to show an independent spirit, to depart from the structure or to contend against the government.

The number of cabinet ministers now permitted under the Salaries Act, excluding the leader of the government in the Senate, is 25. The bill before us seeks to establish, in addition, five ministers of state, making a total of 30. It also seeks to establish posts for a number of parliamentary secretaries, but not more than the number of ministers who are in the cabinet. I assume that these, together with the 25 under the Salaries Act and the five ministers of state, would make a total of 60 posts within the government structure to which a salary is attached. This arrangement permits the Prime Minister to say to another 60: If you do not behave yourselves you will never get into this inner circle. So, he has already got 120 members of the Liberal party tied up with the prospect that if they do not behave according to his satisfaction they cannot expect to remain in, or enter, this inner circle. What little independence may have beat within their breasts would be subdued by the prospect that they would never be appointed a parliamentary secretary or cabinet minister.

In addition, there are the posts of Whip and Deputy Whip which are power posts—two more people the Prime Minister can control. There is the deputy to yourself, Mr. Speaker, and there are the chairmen of the committees, 25, more or less, depending upon the number of special committees, who also occupy positions of power controlled by the Prime Minister. We all know that if the