

respond to suggestions coming from the Committee on Management and Members' Services.

That being said, the very concept of accountability implies that we must not only have the right, we must also be seen to have the right. The visibility of this right is lacking in the Board of Internal Economy and its membership. Let's be realistic. In other parliamentary democracies, even in Canada in the provincial legislatures, backbenchers have a say in the administration of the institution. Why should we not have the same responsibility and the same duties here in the House of Commons, especially since our parliamentary colleagues in the other place have already taken steps to make their presence felt in the manner in which they are administered.

Mr. Speaker, in the Senate, which I suppose I should not name, they have already done in practice, though not in law, what the Hon. Member for Edmonton West is suggesting.

We are nearing the end of this Parliament. I do not think that, in the few days of debate we have left before a general election, we can expect to change the Board of Internal Economy. It certainly is not, and perhaps should not be, a legislative priority. However, I urge all my colleagues on both sides of the House who return after the election to act on the recommendations of the Hon. Member for Edmonton West, which are also contained in the Ninth Report of the Special Committee on Regulatory Reform and adopt them, either as is or as amended.

The time to do this is at the beginning of a new Parliament. We now have two new leaders. What will be their respective positions? Let the voters decide. However, one will be Leader of the Opposition and one Prime Minister. The two new leaders have promised to give the House of Commons more responsibility and a more active role, which might even go so far as the much maligned free vote, but at least some necessary changes will be made in our operating methods.

The Third Report of the Special Committee on Regulatory Reform is only a first step. The House must go much further when a new Parliament begins. For instance, it should start by broadening the scope of the Board of Internal Economy by opening membership to backbenchers and making the Board truly accountable. Mr. Speaker, as you know, neither the Chair nor the President of the Privy Council nor members of the Board of Internal Economy may be questioned here in the House on the operations of this Board. We have no way, as parliamentarians, to express within these walls any problems, concerns, queries or complaints about the Board of Internal Economy. We must go through the Committee on Management and Members' Services, which is only an advisory body that transmits the complaints of Members of the House of Commons to the Board of Internal Economy, the latter having the actual executive power with respect to the administration of this House. Therefore, a good place to start would be to bring some democracy to the Board of Internal Economy, to do what our Senate colleagues have done, and our colleagues in Westminster, and the Questure in France, and what our provincial legislatures or at least most of them have already

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done, which is to allow Members to run their own affairs, because that is what it boils down to. Let us run our own show! This House belongs to us. We work in it. We are responsible to the voters if there are any administration problems. Therefore, if we are accountable for its administration, we should also participate in that administration. Responsibility implies accountability. However, for the time being we are accountable, but not responsible. Give us the responsibility and we can then be truly accountable for the administration of the House of Commons!

Mr. Speaker, without wishing to take up any more of the House's time, since other Members will probably want to speak as well, I should only like to add that I agree wholeheartedly with the Member for Edmonton West, who for many years has been in favour of this measure which, as a concept, is reflected in the recommendations of the Special Committee on Regulatory Reform. It is a measure that probably has the support of most Members of this House. I therefore urge the future Leader of the Government, when a new Parliament begins, to implement not only this recommendation but also the other recommendations made by the Special Committee on Regulatory Reform, in order to make this institution as modern and efficient as it should be and also to make it accountable for its administration to those it administers.

Mr. Speaker, in concluding I want to thank my constituents and my colleagues. Until we meet again. Goodbye!

**An Hon. Member: Hear!**

● (1730)

[*English*]

**Hon. John M. Reid (Kenora-Rainy River):** Mr. Speaker, I can only say it is very odd to rise in the House of Commons to speak after two distinguished gentlemen who have both indicated they may each have made their last speech. I would like to pay tribute to the Hon. Member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) who has been a prominent force in the House of Commons for as long as I have been here. He is a former Speaker of the House and has always taken a very active interest in the proceedings of the House of Commons' committees on procedure. He has also taken a very prominent role in financial measures before the House of Commons.

I also regret that my friend, the Hon. Member for Rosemount (Mr. Lachance) is leaving. It seems to me that he and I have spent the last year working together on the Special Committee on Procedural Reform for the House of Commons. I have come to know him and to appreciate him in ways that I had not before this opportunity came about. I think the House will be poorer for the loss of both these hon. gentlemen.

One of the things that always impressed me about the hon. gentleman from—

**Mr. Lambert:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to do Hon. Members who participate in the debate