

*Procedure and Organization*

I cite as an example something I am keenly interested in, the Canada Water Act, which we have been asking about for three years. I cannot blame this government and the present Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) for all the delay. He has been in office a little over a year, and that is the amount of delay he has caused. But the previous Liberal government was responsible for the rest.

I am informed that the water act has been revised two or three times in the departments concerned. Cabinet ministers cannot agree among themselves on what should be in it. There is a feud among the various departments as to which will have authority in administering it. Now the attitude of the government is, "After three years when we have our quarrels all settled you fellows must dispose of this thing in 24 hours." That is the kind of programming the government wants, and that is what we are not going to give it.

Much more can be said about programming but now I wish to deal with something else. It is fairly obvious that planning is the purpose of 75c in the mind of the hon. member for Sudbury (Mr. Jerome). But he destroyed his own argument because he said 75c will be used only one per cent of the time. Then he went on to add, "We want to use it so that we can program our whole legislative program for a year." What can one do with an argument like that? It has no validity. Programming is the poorest excuse for the enactment of rule 75c.

The position we are in now is a pretty fair example of the kind of programming the government has in mind. The procedure committee made a report. That report was substantially the same as the motion put on the order paper by the President of the Privy Council, which he subsequently allowed to stand in priority but for some reason or other has not withdrawn. I wonder whether he intends to withdraw it as soon as we have disposed of this item one way or another. Certainly it has no advantage just in lying on the order paper.

What happened was that the actual wording of the committee report was not just what the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) liked. I do not know why he did not like it because he was the one who personally pushed it through the committee. I shall not go into the internal proceedings of the committee as the hon. member for Sudbury (Mr. Jerome) did, but it is quite clear that proposed rule 75b, which the hon. member for Sudbury (Mr. Jerome) said was brought on by the government, was actually proposed by someone else. Those of us who

were on the committee know who that was. It was not a government proposition at all, but the government eventually bought it, put it in and tacked on 75c to go with it. The President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) then pushed it all through the committee with a majority vote, all the opposition members voting against it. But as I say the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) did not like the exact wording in it and he did not want the bother of referring it back to the committee for reconsideration. He said, "We have got a majority in the house. Why should we worry about the committee? We will just put an item on the order paper and jam it through."

As I mentioned on a previous occasion, Mr. Speaker, it is easier and faster to blot out the opposition here in this chamber in one nice little motion than to introduce the committee report, send it back to the committee, and later bring it back into the house again. All I am doing is showing what the government is prepared to do if it has the power. This warns us that if the government gets rule 75c it will use it, properly or improperly. I do not restrict my remarks to the present government. We are putting a rule into our Standing Orders for parliament, not for this government and not for this opposition, and we have to be constantly alert that the government, no matter who it is, and the government house leader, no matter who he is, do not have the authority to wipe out the opposition and have legislative items, that they are particularly concerned about, pass without any discussion.

The hon. member for Sudbury said that what the people of this country want is to participate. That is what we want to do, Mr. Speaker; we want to participate in these legislative matters; we want to take part in the discussions and debates. If the hon. member for Sudbury (Mr. Jerome) wants to talk about the young people, and if he feels so darn happy about them I suggest he had better start looking around the country and see what has happened to young people in the past year, because they are not as great supporters of the Liberal party as they were a year ago. Great promises were made to them, but those promises have been ignored to the point where the young people no longer believe that the government wants them to participate. They no longer believe this. They see examples time after time of the government wanting merely to make its own proposals, go its own way and not care who participates.