

*Procedure and Organization*

they are aroused their wrath is something to behold, and in 1957 and 1958 that wrath was aroused.

I remind the members of the government that the Canadian people cherish the right of dissent and they will not sit idly by if this government tries to ride roughshod over the rights of private members, particularly the members of the opposition. I am not thinking only in terms of those of us who sit in the house. A letter which I thought was very significant came in my mail this morning. It was written by a young man from the province of Ontario whom I have never met. This is what he wrote:

I am a student in grade 10. At this time I would like to express to you my views on the government's proposed rule change which would limit debating time in the House of Commons.

I cannot see how such a measure has a place in Mr. Trudeau's "Just Society".

By adopting such a measure legislation could be railroaded through before it could be fully debated. The opinions of many members and those of their numerous constituents would not be heard if debating time was so limited. And this seems out of place in a democratic country such as Canada. With mail service as slow as it is, some members would not receive letters from concerned constituents commenting on legislation before it is given third reading.

I sincerely hope that such a measure is not adopted and the opposition parties will work against its adoption.

Sincerely and with all best wishes.

**An hon. Member:** What is the postmark?

**Mr. Morison:** Have you a son in grade 10?

**An hon. Member:** Go back to sleep.

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** Since the hon. member has recovered from his afternoon nap may I tell him that, as I just said, I do not know the young man and have never met him but I would be very proud to have a son like him. I would be surprised if the hon. member had a son as intelligent as that young man. Here is a boy who I think represents thousands of young people across this country who believe that dissent and the right to express one's views and, even more important, to express the views of the people one represents in parliament, is an inalienable part of our democratic system.

I urge the house, before we come to a final vote on this matter, to stop and realize that the measure of our democracy is the extent to which we recognize the rights of minorities. After all, a free parliament is the basis of all our freedoms. Destroy it and our democracy will begin to crumble before our eyes.

The President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) argued in his speech yesterday that the small parties have too much power. I can understand his impatience with the small parties that keep trying to prod the government out of its lethargy. But I want to say that we are not here by virtue of the good graces of the President of the Privy Council or of the government. The New Democratic party is here because nearly 1,400,000 Canadian voters voted for us last June. Our party and the Ralliement Cr ditiste represent 1,875,000 voters, and much has happened since then. On June 25 a Gallup poll was published which showed the New Democratic party at 22 per cent, the Cr ditistes and others at 7 per cent, making a total of 29 per cent, and the government at 41 per cent. These small parties at which the President of the Privy Council sneers are not a miniscule body.

**Mr. Stanfield:** You may have overtaken the government by this time.

**Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** They represent nearly a third of the voters of this country, and if the government keeps on in this way we will soon represent more than the government in the Gallup poll. I want to tell the government that the minor parties will not disappear if the government resorts to measures of repression and curtailment of free speech. I want to tell the gentlemen opposite that the representatives of this party will be here long after some of those who are seeking to destroy them have disappeared from the political scene.

In a free parliament what we have to do is to find the fine balance between the right of dissent and the right of the government to get on with the business of the country. Everyone recognizes that no member or group of members should have the power to prevent important decisions being made by the parliament of Canada. I believe that rules 75A and 75B go a long way toward finding that balance. After all, the government is not dealing in this parliament with obstructionists. They are dealing with reasonable and responsible men who are answerable to their constituents. I want to ask the government members, when they rise to speak, to point out any instances in this parliament during this session when the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), the Leader of the Ralliement Cr ditiste (Mr. Caouette) or myself have acted irresponsibly and held up the business of the house or tried to prevent the government from getting measures before the house and reaching decisions with respect to them. They have been dealing