

*Motion for Concurrence in Report*

covering 80 or 90 clauses, dealing with substantive and procedural matters, a great many important issues which are especially crucial in the social and moral life of this nation. Through you, Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of the house, how would this measure be programmed? I suggest to you that any opposition party—and I go further—any members of the government, the private members of the government party, who are prepared to accept without challenge the type of programming envisioned in this proposed standing order 16-A, do not deserve to sit in this house. They are not justifying their responsibilities to the people who have sent them here. Mr. Speaker, this place must not become a legislative incubator.

Now, sir, some mention has been made about the practice in the United Kingdom. I challenge the implication contained in the remarks made by the right hon. Prime Minister. Virtually all of the arrangements which are made in the United Kingdom are worked out by virtue of agreements.

When our committee was over there last year we went to a dinner given by Mr. Speaker. I sat next to a gentleman with whom I struck up a conversation. I discovered he is what is known in England as "the usual channels." He is an official of the treasury department attached to the office of the chief government whip, and he stays in that capacity. When the government changes, this official goes as an assistant to the chief whip of the opposition party. He ranges between the parties, through constant negotiations. He is trusted as an honest broker. He shuffles from one side to the other, working out the course of the legislative program measure by measure, session by session, even section by section in order to try to develop for the benefit of the members of the house some indication of the time which will be spent on a measure and when it will come up for a vote.

As a result of that I think it is safe to say that 95 per cent of the business announced by the government house leader during the course of the week comes from these arrangements. The balance is usually contained in private members bills and private members resolutions. For what it is worth, Mr. Speaker, I have here a copy of the *Hansard* for the day I was present, containing a statement made by the Hon. Richard Crossman on the business for the week. Three of the days of that week were private members days, one was a government bill, second reading, and two were committee stages of other bills. I

[Mr. Baldwin.]

had the occasion to discuss these with the government people and with opposition people. In each case there had been arrangements worked out.

Without in any way denigrating the party of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) I would say that my responsibilities are a little heavier than his. Our party is Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. From time to time he and I feel it is our duty to arrive at the same destination, but sometimes we think it possible to get there by different routes. This occasionally may make my task as house leader a little more difficult than that of the hon. member. But I suggest through you, sir, to the right hon. Prime Minister, to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald), and to all the members of the house that in virtually every one of the cases where the government sees fit to put a measure before us, with a proposal such as that contained in the amendment of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), agreement would be reached. There would be negotiation. There would be bargaining. There would be the necessity of distributing the functions of the usual channels in the United Kingdom between the respective house leaders. But I suggest this would be done, and where it is not done the government would then have to put itself in precisely the same position as the government in the United Kingdom. When in the opinion of the United Kingdom government a measure has been debated to an extent which requires termination, the government moves closure. This is a weapon which is available here. All that is required is 24 hours notice under the appropriate standing order. Debate having been initiated and not being completed, the government has the option to exercise this responsibility and bring the debate to a close.

But I go beyond that, Mr. Speaker. How will it be possible for the members of this house, dealing with important, complex, difficult measures—measures dealing with economic, social and human problems—to know what is involved until debate has been commenced, until there has been an opportunity to question, to challenge, to scrutinize? This was the case in the famous pipe line debate and in the debate on the emergency measures of some years ago. After the debates had been commenced these measures were subjected to crucial examination, and only after it had become apparent to members of the opposition precisely what were the problems