

The *Globe and Mail* of February 21 says:

The truth is that if there was to be a second-chance confidence vote every time a government, minority or otherwise, was defeated on a major money bill, there would no longer be responsible government in this country—

If they were allowed to get away with it, how many of them would we see in parliament again—

Referring to members of parliament.

—except on those state occasions when an official want of confidence of vote had been called? The government could be defeated on major program after major program, and so long as enough politicians felt disinclined for an immediate election, the boys could trot back to Ottawa and vote continuing confidence in the government.

In the interval between defeat and confidence motion, governments would be free to make whatever deals or hand out whatever patronage they thought would be necessary to sustain confidence.

That is a rather strong statement coming from the *Globe and Mail* and indicating some of the perhaps not recognized implications of this action. This article concludes with these words:

Even Prime Minister Pearson, in his hour of difficulty, should not want this for Canada.

Then I quote from the *Gazette* of Monday, February 26, an article under the heading, "What Precedent for the Future?" This, sir, is the matter that has bothered me from the beginning of this crisis—what precedent for the future? What are we going to hand down to our successors? We do not last forever here. What is the parliament in the future going to be? Let us see what the *Gazette* has to say:

The importance of the vote in the House of Commons... is no longer whether the government will this time be defeated... The more serious question is what sort of precedent will be set for the future, if the Prime Minister's motion is passed.

This is always the chief difficulty with unusual methods and procedures. Even if they succeed in accomplishing some immediate and temporary aim, they linger on, to influence the future.

Parliamentary life revolves largely on precedents. What sort of precedent is this motion setting up, for years to come?

This precedent could have various effects upon parliament's future. For one thing, it could induce a new carelessness in governments. Hitherto, the possibility of defeat in the house on a bill of great importance has always been an exceedingly serious matter—

All this, now, could be changed. It would be no longer vital if a government were defeated. It can always do the thing over again, in the same way that a movie director can cut a length of film and consign it to the studio floor and call back the actors for a retake.

I submit that this is fairly weighty evidence to support the point of view that I have been bringing forward. In the *Winnipeg Tribune* of

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Motion Respecting House Vote

Saturday, February 24, under the heading, "Parliament, our finest institution", an article by R. W. Queen-Hughes contains this paragraph:

In an age when unchecked power is becoming ever more concentrated the parliamentary system, as evolved by trial and error, is an incomparable medium for preserving the freedoms of the individual. No court anywhere is better equipped to do that than the people's sovereign representatives... that is, their members of parliament.

Those are quotations from newspapers. I now quote the words of the leader of the Progressive Conservative party when speaking in Ottawa on Saturday, February 24. The leader of that party used these words, with every one of which I agree and I think they should be printed and dispatched to every Conservative in this country and to all those who are interested in the preservation of our freedom.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Churchill: These are the words:

Under the system as amended, or invented, by Messrs. Pearson and Caouette, the executive branch becomes stronger, parliament weaker; the executive becomes less responsible, parliament less supreme; it becomes easier for cabinet to have its will and its way, harder for parliament or the people to stop it.

● (9:30 p.m.)

Cabinet becomes more free, parliament—and Canadians—become less free.

... Thus is history written. Thus, an institution is altered. Thus, freedom is diminished. Thus, responsibility is eroded. Thus, we strengthen the hand of the apparatus that governs and weaken the protection of those who are governed.

I wish I had written these words myself.

I hope people are beginning to see the issue as I see it. When I showed this quotation to some people in the news media today I asked them "Why didn't you people on radio and television repeat that from your stations every hour on the hour, as you did the propaganda which the Prime Minister put out last week?"

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Churchill: Do not tell me that the real issue has been presented to the people so that they were able to make a decision on Friday night or on Thursday night. How many of them heard the statement, or statements similar to it, that our freedom is diminished?

Mr. Nesbitt: Just like in "1984".

Mr. Churchill: In the time that I have been in the house, from 1951 to the present