

*Procedure and Organization*

with that, he comes back at us with a closure rule to which we cannot agree and as I said earlier, we are ready to fight all summer if we have to, to prevent its passing.

I continue quoting Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who said:

All through that speech the right hon. gentleman stated—

Speaking of Mr. Borden.

—and reiterated that the object of the Government in proposing this new resolution was not to impede in any way the freedom of debate or to prevent free discussion, but simply to avoid the abuse of it. My right hon. friend was profuse of declarations that the minority, when these rules have been adopted, can always rely upon fair play; but the words were scarcely out of his lips when we were brought to realize how much fair play we may expect at the hands of hon. gentlemen opposite. By the unwritten law of Parliament, not to speak of the courtesy which generally prevails between the two sides of the House, it is expected that when the Prime Minister brings an important measure to the consideration of the House, the Opposition, by its leader shall be allowed to present the views which are entertained on the other side.

These statements were made in 1913 and today a majority government would once again have us accept rules which are unacceptable. And I quote again from the statement made by Sir Wilfrid Laurier:

The task which he set himself to accomplish, and which the majority will accomplish, I have no doubt, was simply to put a gag upon the rules which we, in this House, have looked upon almost as sacred and which have come to us from the Mother of Parliaments.

These are the same words as those I heard yesterday from the parliamentary secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Forest). Sir Wilfrid Laurier went on saying:

These rules were not made in a day; they are the embodiment of the wisdom of many generations of statesmen and the result of the experience of men, whose whole life was devoted to the public welfare, and who brought British institutions to the degree of excellency which they had reached at the time Confederation was established.

We have heard it stated that these rules are antiquated. I do not admit that at all. These rules are not antiquated. They were not made for a day or for a period; they were made for the ages. It can be said of them, as has been said of the maxims of civil law which have come to us from the Roman jurists and which are the basis of the civil law of most of the nations of Europe, and they are reason crystallized into writing.

The maxims of the civil law have been applied to the relations of the people in daily life and the maxims of our parliamentary procedure have been accepted as the duties of the transaction of business in all deliberative assemblies.

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Statements such as these were made in 1913, and today those who would always remind us with pleasure that Sir Wilfrid Laurier was one of them—he who made statements such as I have just quoted—would be ready to throw all those things overboard by introducing a rule of closure in Standing Order 75c. We certainly cannot accept Standing Order 75c, but we will accept Standing Order 75A and 75B. In fact, immediately after the withdrawal of 75c we would be prepared to extend the sitting hours.

Mr. Speaker, I should like also to quote a few words, of the late Ernest Lapointe, who was also a member of the opposition and who said the following:

The duties of an opposition are to discuss the measures introduced in parliament during the various stages of the bills and certainly not to filibuster.

He said that it would be a crime against the state. I continue the quotation:

But, Mr. Speaker, when a measure is intended to eradicate parliament, to deprive it of all its rights, privileges and powers, it is the duty of the opposition to seek to prevent its adoption, and those who are guilty of a crime against the state are those responsible for the introduction of such legislation—

It is believed, Mr. Speaker, that we should stand at attention and salute when the Prime Minister wishes it. In fact, Parliament should be ready to do the goose-step at the Prime Minister's will.

Czarist methods have given birth to Bolshevism, and that is something we do not want in Canada. It is blameworthy to undermine in this way parliament's authority and to do so, the Prime Minister orders the President of the Privy Council and the Minister of Agriculture to muzzle the opposition.

Have no fear, hon. members of this house. If we must—as I said a while ago—spend the whole summer here, we will, because history is written thanks to defenders of liberty and not by hypocritical dictators, who represent the Liberal party.

● (3:30 p.m.)

Furthermore, here is what Mr. Ernest Lapointe had to say in this regard, and I quote:

I have followed the discussion very closely and listening to the supporters of this legislation, I could not help but think of Disraeli's words: "A Tory government is organized hypocrisy".

If that could be said in 1913, why should we on this side of the house not be able to say it today, since an attempt is being made