

*Procedure and Organization*

**Mr. Goyer:** But what about the flag?

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** I have no shame in that connection. I place no stricture whatever on the debate on the flag.

[Translation]

I shall only say that even if one was not born in Montreal, one is not compelled to share the views which are popular there.

Mr. Speaker, if we want to talk about protracted debate, let us recall the pipe-line debate which although more violent than the flag debate lasted as long.

[English]

The hon. member would not even know what the government tried to do with the Defence Production Act of 1955. It was a bad law. As a result of opposition to it public opinion was mobilized, and the then prime minister, Mr. St. Laurent, had to send Mr. Howe fishing so that the offensive clauses upon which Mr. Howe was insisting could be removed from the bill.

This is why we in this house must have the power to oppose if necessary. As a member of the committee on procedure I opposed many of the changes that were brought in by consent last December. My stand on this proposal today is absolutely clear: I think it is wrong.

With all due respect to the Chair, Mr. Speaker, I feel that the ruling the Chair made in regard to acceptance of the motion moved by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) was also wrong. There is no rule that says I cannot disagree with a finding of the Chair. Although I accept the ruling made by the Chair I do not think it is correct. It is wrong because the motion that appeared on the order paper was in clear defiance of an order of the house.

The only member who had a right to bring forward a motion in regard to the procedure of the house was the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Blair) as chairman of a committee that had been instructed by the house to study a certain matter and report. He, in turn, had been instructed by the committee to seek concurrence in the committee report. A government minister had no prerogative to bring forward an amended version of the motion. That action was totally and irretrievably wrong.

If that ruling is to persist and rule 75c is approved, the house will have been delivered bound hand and foot, with a gag ready to be placed in the mouths of its members, right on the doorstep of the government as it wants.

[Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West).]

Under 75c, which deals with legislation and not with estimates, if a committee brings in a report to the house that is in any way critical of the government the government will tell a supine chairman of that committee—many of them have been supine chairmen or have behaved as such—

**Mr. Drury:** Shame.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** I say shame on the government for its actions in regard to the chairman of the transport committee, the man the government put in hospital. The government is also guilty of shameful conduct in regard to the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton. He was put under intolerable pressure. He was put in an impossible position, his committee having decided in its wisdom to bring in a certain report.

A great deal has been said about the merits of our new committee system. It was going to be the beginning of the dawning of a new era.

**Mr. Crouse:** The cornerstone of the just society.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** Yes. All members were going to participate. They would be able to question witnesses and to express their opinions. They would be able to bring forward the reports they wished.

We must remember that committees consist of a majority of government members. In this regard I could say something about government members who express a degree of independence. As a result of the new method of appointing members to committees, government members are being yanked off without their consent or consultation. An example of this took place in the transport committee last week.

**Mr. Lessard (LaSalle):** It was done in your time too.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** No, it was not.

**Mr. Peters:** They had to come to the house first.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** Let me ask the hon. member for Calgary South (Mr. Mahoney) or the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. Osler) whether they were consulted about being pulled off the transport committee. Did they consent to that?

**Mr. Mahoney:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order—