

invaded the House of Commons in Westminster and shut down Parliament.

Some Hon. Members: What do you have to hide?

Mr. Sargeant: I hear Hon. Members asking what I have to hide. If Members of the House of Commons are not allowed to act in the best interests of their constituents, if they are not allowed to act freely, and if their offices can be raided by whatever agency a government sets up and gives authority to, clearly the privileges of Members are being violated. Clearly it is violating the historical fact that the House of Commons and the offices of Members who, by extension and the precedent of the Jerome ruling in 1979, are part of the House of Commons. They are taking away a historical right. They are violating a democracy which has been in place for hundreds and hundreds of years.

Sadly, under this particular piece of legislation a very basic tenet of our democracy could be violated or lost. They sit over there today rather smugly, asking what we have to hide, to what we are objecting, and saying that it is all right with a warrant.

Some Hon. Members: What are you afraid of?

Mr. Sargeant: I am afraid of Parliament being violated. They sit there rather smugly, saying that there is nothing wrong with taking away the historical privileges of Parliament.

Mr. Evans: Why don't you send it to committee where that can be investigated?

Mr. Sargeant: I see Mr. Speaker signalling that my time is almost up. I will ignore the rabble across the aisle because I may not be so charitable; I may use some of the unkind language which was used earlier in the debate today.

In conclusion, obviously we have to object to this piece of legislation. It threatens rights in the country. It threatens our democracy. We will oppose it as much as we can.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I want to take advantage of the last few minutes remaining before four o'clock to speak in this debate on second reading and, especially, to speak to the motion moved by the Hon. Member for La Prairie (Mr. Deniger). First of all, I can give my colleagues opposite the assurance that at four o'clock, we shall proceed with private members business, and that at five o'clock we shall adjourn as usual. I do not intend to take advantage of the absence of Opposition Members today to extend the sitting hours of the House. I therefore ask the Members of the Opposition to listen carefully so that they will understand the nature of the procedure now being debated instead of being unduly concerned about having to sit beyond normal sitting hours.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation now before the House is not new, although it bears the number C-9. It was introduced

Security Intelligence Service

subsequent to a Bill that was presented during the previous session as Bill C-157, which, after being very substantially amended, was introduced as Bill C-9, the Bill now being considered by the House.

To understand the action taken by the Member for La Prairie, we must realize that the subject matter of the Bill to establish a Canadian Security Intelligence Service was considered by the Senate for two months, and significantly, the Bill was referred to the Senate after the New Democratic Party had systematically obstructed the first reading of Bill C-157, an unusual and very rare occurrence in the House.

Thus, the Government's very first attempt to create this security service met with an entirely negative, irrational and irresponsible reaction on the part of the New Democratic Party, which refused to allow the Government to introduce the Bill. If they had challenged the Bill on second reading, at the time, it would have been clear that they wanted to improve the legislation and make an intelligent contribution. However, it was when the Government first attempted to bring the subject before the House that the New Democratic Party obstructed its attempts systematically, not because it wanted to express its own point of view, but because it simply wanted to create obstruction and prevent the tabling of this Bill. During the previous session, we had to vote on first reading and subsequently refer the subject matter to the Senate. For two months, the Senate heard witnesses and considered the question. The Solicitor General listened, consulted and finally amended, so that the Bill now before the House, Bill C-9, is an improved piece of legislation which takes into account the views of the Canadian people and of those who have an interest in the security of this country.

Therefore, if we understand the nature of the debate and how the Canadian Parliamentary system works, there is no reason to get upset when at this stage, a Government member tries to bring this debate to a logical conclusion, so that the Bill can be referred to Committee, where it can still be amended.

Perhaps Hon. Members will care to recall that before today, twenty-five Members had spoken to Bill C-9 at the second reading stage. That is impressive, considering the fact that on second reading, only the principle of a Bill is to be examined before referring the Bill to Committee, where, after witnesses have been heard, it is examined in detail, clause by clause. The Bill can be amended at this stage. After committee, there is the report stage where once again, amendments may be considered, and finally, there is third reading, before the Bill goes to the other Chamber, to the Senate, for consideration once again at all stages.

What we are seeing here today, is that after twenty-five Members have had an opportunity to express their views, a Member of the Opposition, who is a Member of the New Democratic Party, rises to say that they intend to move an amendment and delay second reading of the Bill for three