

Procedure and Organization

will be the death sentence of this institution. They sit and they smirk. One of these ministers is the Minister of Veterans' Affairs (Mr. Dubé). While veterans all over this country are suffering he does not dare do anything because the Prime Minister has said that it must not be done.

Isn't it a strange commentary that ministers of the Crown today are unable to speak unless directed, and unable to arise unless it is their day to get out of the corral—and they accept it? They glory in it. What a government! Backbenchers talk of the rights of parliament. They cannot call their souls their own. They dare not speak in committee without permission and direction. We must thank the hon. member for York East (Mr. Otto), who made it very clear what the instructions were that debunked this idea that the committee system was going to work free from any consideration of political bias or prejudice. He pointed out that the direction was, "You will vote as you are told." So much for the backbenchers and their power. I should like to see the backbenchers speak up but they are not allowed to speak.

When the cabinet is throttled, what happens to the backbenchers? All they have is the right to vote; all they constitute is the necessary membership to provide a quorum. I was not here last week because I took the government at its word. I am back because I do not want the government caught with its quorum down again.

Why do they act this way? I have done a little research and I have read a little about Machiavelli. The Prime Minister was asked shortly after he became the Prime Minister who was his model politician and statesman, and without hesitation he said "Machiavelli". I have a volume here which describes Machiavelli as having been a talented dissembler, a ready opportunist, a master in the field of human weakness, an accountant of forgotten sentences, a promoter of vanity, a skilful juggler, a lover of cunning and a worshipper of force.

He is the one who has been chosen as the guardian saint of the Liberal Party. I will deal in a moment with the promises made by the Prime Minister. I will not deal with them in a personal way as he is not here. He is out in western Canada and he is finding out what his ministers have not told him.

Just imagine the three silent ministers from western Canada. We have from Winnipeg the hon. gentleman who knows more about wheat, I presume, than any other person in

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

this house if not in the country as a whole. Then there is the hon. member from Saskatchewan. He is a general factotum and has knowledge of almost everything, at least according to the number of portfolios he fills from time to time. Then there is the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) from Alberta who, when he was sitting on this side of the house in the Social Credit party demanded action from the government in loud and stentorian tones till he got close to the point when he made a sautis; a turn over of views, and gave us a major performance when he finally saw the light and took his place. He was in favour of the two price system.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I always hesitate to interrupt the right hon. gentleman and I appreciate that what he is saying is by way of an introduction to his address to the house, but I have to remind him that we are dealing with the amendment to the main motion which has reference to proposed Standing Order 75c. I know that in due course the right hon. gentleman will bare his remarks and direct them to the subject matter.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I was just in the process of showing where the hypocrisy was, and where was the location of the stupidity. The Prime Minister made a statement the other day he ought not to have made, but I know that is the attitude of this government. They want this power for the purpose of carrying out their wishes regardless of the people of Canada. No tyrant could ask for more than this power.

The Prime Minister would go all through the form of having a parliament. He would have it sit, but whenever there was criticism that the government did not like in would come rule 75c to destroy the opposition. I say to you, Sir, that in order to build the argument and to show that this is so, I have the right, I suggest with deference, to point out what is being done here by this government.

Let me go back to *Hansard* of last fall, September 16, 1968, when the Prime Minister made a dissertation on parliament and revealed his views as to how parliament should act, and also indicated his ideas of parliament in so far as the opposition is concerned. You can read it in *Hansard* for September 16 at pages 72 and 73. After expressing doubt as to whether parliament is an institution that should be maintained, despite