

Procedure and Organization

these conditions must be present within any legislative body if it is to do its job properly.

● (3:30 p.m.)

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that whatever the rules are, and no matter what changes to the rules are introduced, if hon. members of this house become convinced that the government is attempting to operate improperly, without due regard for those matters which must be undertaken, we shall not have a good parliament. When harmony, reason and co-operation fly out the window, the result will not be happy for this house or this country. I am offering no threat; I am speaking simply from my knowledge of human beings in public life. I know what the results of the government's action will be. I say that the government's insistence in pressing on with this dogmatic, ruthless authoritarianism does not bode well for this house and this country.

When I practised law in my younger years I enjoyed nothing so much as a good fight. I enjoyed fighting in the courts.

An hon. Member: You are now junior to the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton.

Mr. Baldwin: Only in the sense that I follow him as a speaker in this debate, Mr. Speaker. As I say, I enjoyed nothing so much as a good fight in court. With the passage of years, when I became more mellow—and I recommend to my hon. friends opposite that they, too, should become mellow—I became a great believer in the cardinal principle that a case settled is a case won. When you settle a case both sides gain something and neither side loses. I based my practice on the precepts of arbitration, agreement, understanding and reason, precepts which also make parliament work. If these precepts are not followed I fear what the result may be when we come back next year.

At this time I shall confine my present argument mainly to proposed standing order 76B. In his remarks the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton tried to tell us that proposed standing order 76C is to be invoked only where agreement cannot be reached under 75A or 75B. When speaking on 75B the hon. member indicated that included among the parties which are to reach agreement under that standing order must be the government. I am having difficulties with my eyes at this time, Mr. Speaker, but even so I fail to find any language in proposed standing order 75B which supports the hon. member's contention. Nor can the President of the

Privy Council point to any such wording. I think it is clear that if that wording were included in the proposed standing order, it would never have seen the light of day. The omission may have been unintentional, and may have resulted from a spirit of magnanimity on the part of the government party—which I very much doubt—but the fact is that there is nothing within the four corners of proposed standing order 75B which suggests that “a majority” must include the government. It need not necessarily include the government merely because a minister is delegated as being a person who must make the application for allocation of time in the house.

I ask the President of the Privy Council, what will be the situation if representatives of parties meet, discuss allocation of time and then hear the government's representative say that the government is prepared to allot one day, two hours, or whatever the time may be, for this stage of the debate. The representatives of the other three parties may say, “Oh, no; we have certain amendments to propose; in the interest of our constituents we feel that certain aspects of the bill must be resisted, and in order to make our case properly, submit amendments and subamendments, we feel that six days is essential.” Let us say that, ultimately, the representatives of opposition parties, who are always reasonable people, reduce their demand from six days to four days.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Is that six days for each stage, or in total?

Mr. Baldwin: It could be for each stage or for one stage. I am speaking of a hypothetical case, Mr. Speaker. Let us say that the minister then says, “No, you will have one day only.” What will happen? It is clear that the representatives in question, whoever they may be, constitute a committee emanating from this house with decision making powers. Having exercised their decision making powers the majority of those representatives may say, “We need four days.” It could easily happen that the minister may say, “Phooey on your four days. I will not stand up in the house and move the motion.” That situation could easily develop, and it is therefore clear that proposed rule 75B is completely useless. Of course the President of the Privy Council and his colleagues may say that a different interpretation is to be placed on the proposed standing order.

We have had experience in this house of how this government operates, Mr. Speaker. Only a little while ago we had a situation in