

Proposal for Time Allocation

other distinguished members of the cabinet, not only during the present government's tenure of office but also when other parties held the office of government, that things must be done; we must get moving; the business of the country must be attended to. We received a long list of legislation which must be passed dealing with almost everything conceivable. I think the right hon. gentleman did forget to suggest that we should add some fitting words to the Sermon on the Mount, that we should amend the Ten Commandments and rewrite Hamlet's soliloquy. I suggest that the right hon. gentleman had everything in his speech.

• (8:50 p.m.)

Mr. Knowles: What about Hebrews 12 and 16?

Mr. Baldwin: I believe that intervention is superfluous because that matter is being attended to already. I recognize, Mr. Speaker, that there is an urgency about some matters. We must bear in mind today, however, that with the division in the political parties there is bound to be feeling. This is an actual part of the political process. In the course of the last two or three years the government which the right hon. gentleman leads has seen fit to introduce certain measures which have re-awakened latent hostilities and strong dislikes. It will be for historians at a later date to say whether this was the appropriate time or whether it may well have been more appropriate to wait a longer period of time. The fact remains that in the country, and reflected in this house, there are stronger feelings of hostility than usually prevail.

Consequently, in assessing the necessity for introducing and dealing with legislation, there must rest upon the government the very grave burden of undertaking to give priority to measures which are less controversial. I do not expect there are many matters that will be dealt with in this house without controversy. It is in that atmosphere that the government now seeks to curtail debate on this bill by means of this motion. In the light of what the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) has said, and according to my interpretation of events, much of the difficulty we are experiencing today must be laid at the door of the government.

In the fall of 1965, with a long period ahead of us and with urgent legislation to deal with, with the estimates for that fiscal year untouched, the government saw fit, for reasons which it considered sufficient but which obviously were not acceptable to the country, to

[Mr. Baldwin.]

call an election. Ever since that election the business of this house has not been properly ordered. Over and over again we have experienced situations in which legislation has been postponed, where ministers charged with responsibility for completing certain items have left on political safaris or for other good reasons. As a result, we have had to postpone these measures and deal with something else.

These postponements and delays have been the cause of uneasiness, and a feeling that there has not been that degree of advance which there should be in the legislative process here. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that there is a liability upon the government. After all, they are charged with the responsibility of so ordering the affairs of this house that we will know what we are doing, that when we start a matter we will have an opportunity to carry it through to completion. I believe these are some of the reasons for the feelings which have been generated in connection with this debate, and for which the government must accept a substantial degree of responsibility.

The right hon. gentleman spoke about changes in the legislative process. He mentioned certain matters, with some of which I would agree. We must bear in mind, and I think the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. Churchill) referred to this, that there is an equal responsibility resting upon the government to ensure the rights of private members. It is not enough simply to give to the grasping hands of government the right to use more power to speed up the legislative process for purposes which they consider necessary.

In the last few weeks, Mr. Speaker, I have had occasion to read some of the reports made by a special committee in the United Kingdom House of Commons, where they have been plagued with some of the difficulties with which we are faced. Running through the transcript of evidence are the same stories which we hear concerning the frustration of members and the desire of the government to introduce more and more legislation, often ill-conceived and therefore likely to be ill-digested. Some of this legislation, which the government thinks it wants, is not necessarily the legislation which meets the requirements of the country.

They have a very interesting arrangement there, Mr. Speaker, and in this connection I disagree to some extent with my colleague from Winnipeg South Centre. There, Mr.