

*Procedure and Organization*

they are dissatisfied with the institutions of our country. We must be prepared to say that the business of the country is being carried out in a proper, meaningful and intelligent way and that the parliamentary process can and will exercise good judgment and control without giving the appearance of senility or petrification from age.

We have the opportunity to demonstrate that this house is not just a haven for orators. We should not insist on operating under the terms and conditions popular in the days of the Colonial Laws Validity Act which, I might say, does not mean a colonial damn to anyone who voted me into this House of Commons.

**Mr. Aiken:** Why don't you dispose of it then and change the constitution?

**Mr. Jerome:** One might anticipate the difficulty we would have in changing the constitution when we are having this kind of difficulty making a change in the rules. We have an opportunity to demonstrate that this House of Commons is not merely something from the past but is and will continue to be the heartbeat of our nation, worthy of the zeal and talent of the young people of our country.

I plead with members opposite to face the real dangers in this regard of their resistance to intelligent change. I plead with them to embrace these changes and look for more. Instead of staying on this point, we should move on to considering whether proceedings in committees should be such that freedom can be exercised to make changes for or against the government. We should discuss whether the people of this country are better served when governments can be defeated and put out of office in a year or two, or whether the government should be allowed to carry out its program in four or five years. These are changes we should be speaking about. We should embrace these present changes and accept them as being the first step. We should look for many more changes so we will always be able to ensure that parliament will remain a source of pride, not just to retrospective historians but to all Canadians, especially the youth of our country who, thank God, do not have their eyes constantly on the past but on the future.

• (5:00 p.m.)

**Mr. G. H. Aiken (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** Mr. Speaker, the speech just made by the hon. member for Sudbury (Mr. Jerome) cries out for a reply.

[Mr. Jerome.]

**An hon. Member:** From you?

**Mr. Aiken:** From me, and I am going to tell him a few facts of life. The great plea that the hon. member for Sudbury (Mr. Jerome) and the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) have made on behalf of proposed rule 75c is that the government wants to program its business. How can it possibly program its legislation when nobody knows what its legislative program is? What kind of programming is it when the government puts an item on the order paper one day and wants it passed the next? What kind of programming is it when bills like the water act are promised for a year and a half but never appear on the order paper? How can parliament support the government in programming its legislation when items are put on the order paper but never proceeded with, when promised bills are never put on the order paper, and when other things which are promised never appear in parliament so that we may consider them?

What kind of programming is it when committees report after due deliberation and their reports lie on the order paper without concurrence being moved in them? What kind of programming is it when government decisions are made and announced in the house even when committees are still in session deliberating the subject matter of those announcements? How on earth can the government say in these circumstances that it wants support for programming its legislation?

There are other circumstances to consider. We have an order paper. What is on it of importance that still remains to be passed? Nothing at all. Everything of importance was duly considered and passed in this parliament. But there were lots of things in the Speech from the Throne that never appeared on the order paper. Is that the kind of programming we want to support? This is nonsense. The whole question of programming is an invalid excuse for putting the opposition out of business.

What the government really wants is programmed disorganization. Members of the government want to be able to do what they want when they want, but they do not want to tell the house anything about it. They do not want us to know what they are planning. They do not want the public to know what they are planning, because they might change their minds before their plan appears in final form.