

Proposal for Time Allocation

of Public Works (Mr. McIlraith), the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pickersgill), the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Hellyer) and the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson), but I restrict myself to the latter. These were the words of ridicule that he heaped on us in 1956:

The opposition, of course, claim, and they claim very often, to be gagged. If that is true, Mr. Speaker, they are the noisiest group of gagged men in history.

Those words came back to destroy the government of which the right hon. gentleman was then secretary of state for external affairs. The Minister of Public Works says the debate has gone on for so many days. Let me read what Laurier said in regard to debate. I refer to the 1912-13 *Hansard* at page 7431:

It has been charged against us that we have delayed the business of the house, that we have prevented it from going on. Sir, I deny the charge altogether; there is not a word of foundation for it.

Further on he said this:

It is true, sir, that we opposed a certain measure. It is true that we opposed the bill for naval aid. We did that with all the might at our command; we did it with all the means at our command under the rules of the house. Am I to be told that in the exercise of this power of strenuous opposition we did anything which is not in accordance with the best traditions of parliamentary government?

Then he went on to deal with the length of time, and in reply to an interruption he pointed out this fact, as recorded at page 9454 of *Hansard* for the same session, and I quote the interruption first:

My right hon. friend would surely be disposed to admit that in nineteen or twenty days we ought to be able to make sufficient progress to enable every amendment to be considered.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier: I do not admit anything of the kind. I can show precedents of bills of less importance that have taken the house more than thirty days in committee of the whole—

The minister referred to British parliamentary practice. As recorded at page 9534 of the same *Hansard* Sir Wilfrid Laurier said it is quite common in the United Kingdom to have lengthy discussion in committee on important bills, for one, two or three weeks. Then he went on and dealt in general with the situation in this regard.

Why has there been this debate, Mr. Speaker? Because we have not been able to get the answers to those questions we have asked.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am now going to refer to words that will become immortal as an

example of non-egotism on the part of the Minister of National Defence. Before I do that I say this, what we have been treated to in this country in the last few weeks is a plethora of press releases issued by the visible presence of the representative of the minister—organized nonsense.

• (3:20 p.m.)

I cannot pass up the opportunity to refer to one thing that took place in the United States, because it is of interest today. In 1942 the father of the United States airborne forces and the first officer to command one of the divisions was William M. Lee. He had the rank of major general, which of course we must not bring up at all for consideration at this time. It was the custom then as a man jumped from the transport plane to shout "Geronimo". Geronimo was an Apache rebel who caused the Americans a lot of trouble. Major General Lee was transferred to another unit and his place was taken by General Maxwell Taylor. He issued orders that instead of shouting "Geronimo" each paratrooper of the division should shout "Bill Lee" as he jumped out. History is a magnificent study. It is probably only a coincidence that there was so much disorganization, confusion and a complete mix-up when that name was substituted for the former. Let me bring this up to date. The Minister of National Defence and this government are so disorganized and unprepared they might well shout the same cry.

What has happened at this time is that generals, admirals, and air marshals have been swept aside. Their views mean nothing. As the minister said in the course of his remarks "We have to use our own God-given intelligence" to make decisions. I ask the Prime Minister when he speaks—

Mr. Pearson: I am not going to bother.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Is he not going to speak?

Mr. Starr: He is not going to bother.

Mr. Diefenbaker: He is not going to bother. That is the best indication of the utter disregard the Prime Minister has for parliament; he is not going to bother to speak. Is that because he has adopted that unusually unattractive position he took in Vancouver when he was asked about the subject of abortion? He was asked where he stood in this regard and his answer was "I stand firmly". The next question was "where"? His answer was "On the fence". He is not going to bother. No wonder we are faced with closure. The Prime Minister does not want to answer. He does