

*Procedure and Organization*

the Prime Minister. The government would be well advised to answer the questions which are asked in all sincerity. Questions are asked, an answer is promised, then after a lapse of three months when the same questions are again put to ministers they sit glued to their seat, just as the Prime Minister has this past week.

When government supporters speak of having ample time under rule 75c to examine legislation, they are making a ridiculous statement. It would take this government a day to answer the questions I have put to them, and which they have failed to answer in any way, shape or form. To study legislation is not enough. Members should be informed so that they are aware of the results of the legislation once enacted. I could refer to Bill C-135 but I am sure the majority of members on the other side do not even know what Bill C-135 is. For their benefit I inform them that it is the bill that set up the Devco Crown Corporation to look into the affairs of the ailing Cape Breton coal industry.

Very little of that legislation could be changed. For the most part, it is very good legislation. However, how many members are aware of what has resulted from it? Members on all sides of the house cannot be faulted because this legislation has brought about discrimination among those it was intended to help. On recent visits to my home I have taken advantage of the occasion to explain that all Liberal members of the House of Commons cannot be faulted for the discrimination practised under the early retirement plan of the Devco Crown Corporation.

• (5:40 p.m.)

It is no fault of members of this house that a piece of government legislation has been used to bring about this discrimination. There is no question or doubt because the minister responsible in this house admitted there are cases of isolated discrimination. Now, I fail to understand how the minister can say in one breath there is no discrimination under the early retirement leave plan of the Devco Corporation and then, the next moment, in answer to a supplementary question say there are isolated cases. I ask hon. members, does it matter whether there are isolated cases? There still are cases. One would imagine that in a just society such discrimination would not be condoned. The passage of legislation under normal circumstances could have prevented such an unfair departure. What will be the result if members are denied the right to study legislation in order to prevent such a

situation from occurring again? Members may say it is unfortunate but it does not concern them. Today it is my turn, but it may be theirs tomorrow.

Bill C-135 seemed to be the answer to many of the problems. I would be very interested in finding out why the retired chairman of the board acted as he did because I have expressed the opinion all along that the legislation provides the answers for which we are looking. However, the implementation of the legislation has been carried out in a way which is entirely unsuitable to the problems in Cape Breton. This becomes particularly evident when one considers that people 59 years of age are arbitrarily dismissed. This practice is supported by a government which is supposedly leading us into a just society. It is unfortunate that this government is acting as it is. It is in the hands of a troika. The Three Wise Men have taken over and are trying to put into practice what a former Liberal cabinet minister felt could be done as far back as 1951. He felt that he, along with the prime minister and the minister of trade and commerce, were the government. Imagine that! This is the attitude adopted today by these Liberals. They feel three men are the government.

Do not let anyone on that side of the house kid himself that this government is not run by three men only. Step out of line and watch out! Soon you will get your lumps. I should like to quote what this former Liberal cabinet minister had to say. He said:

As long as the three of us remain where we are, I think it will be fairly generally agreed across the country that we have an exceedingly good government.

The three wise men must be looking back at this statement and saying to themselves, if a Liberal cabinet minister in 1951 felt that three men made up the government there is no reason they cannot take over in 1969. But they should look at what happened to this former cabinet minister, the minister of trade and commerce and the prime minister. They all went down the drain, if you will excuse the expression. They exhibited the kind of arrogance that we saw here last week and the kind of arrogance that is evident every day in this house.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) can sit there and smirk. He is all ready with the answers to questions before they are asked. He was so pleased to back up his Prime Minister today that he did not even find it necessary to hear the questions. Every