

They began to present their grievances at party caucuses and to press for more and better organized parliamentary committees. Ministers were not in a very good position to resist those pressures. It is indeed interesting to note that with the minority situation and the length of sessions, ministers had never been more exposed to the influence of their own backbenchers. This was even more so for those having long-term political ambitions. In certain cases, it is not an exaggeration to say that they met private members more often than their own officials. As a result, caucus and parliamentary committees have become more and more influential. They have proposed new legislation which the Government had to bring forward, and they have substantially modified several important bills. Such an "intrusion" of Parliament in the legislative process would not have been tolerated just a few years ago.

This new trend, in my view, is irreversible, because the frustration of the backbenchers and their demand for a greater legislative role have not diminished as a result of recent improvements. Party caucuses will be better organized to enable members not merely to criticize their leaders once a political decision has been made, but above all to give them an opportunity to participate in the decision making process itself.

At the same time, greater emphasis will be placed in Parliament on committees which will then be in a better position to propose new policies, to examine bills more carefully and to review the implementation of existing legislation more systematically, as the present motion will enable us to do.

As we enter into this new era we are moving towards a compromise between the British and the American political institutions. I hope that this compromise will be a happy one. If it is, we will keep our system of responsible Government, the influence of civil servants at the different stages of the legislative process will become much less determining, and the supremacy of Parliament will be a more significant reality than it has been in the past. Thus, the twilight of civil servants will lead us to the rise of Parliament.

**Hon. Edgar Fournier:** I move the adjournment of this political lecture.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Fournier (Madawaska-Restigouche), debate adjourned.

## ADJOURNMENT

Leave having been given to revert to Motions:

**Hon. A. Hamilton McDonald:** Honourable senators, I move, with leave of the Senate and notwithstanding Rule 45(1) (g), that when the Senate adjourns today it do stand adjourned until Thursday next, April 9, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

Honourable senators, perhaps a word of explanation is in order. I am sure you will recall that just prior to the adjournment for the Easter recess I mentioned the possibility that the Senate would not sit on Wednesday, April 8, which is tomorrow, because of the work of our committees. It is also possible that the Senate may not sit a week from tomorrow.

The major reason is that the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce has the White Paper before it, and it seems to others and to myself—including the Leader of the Opposition (Hon. Mr. Flynn)—that the work of that committee on the White Paper must proceed, and proceed rapidly, if we are to hear the witnesses who want and ought to appear before it, and produce a report in time to be meaningful, not only to the Government but to the people of Canada. That is why we are setting aside all day tomorrow for that committee, before whom I understand four major Canadian companies will be giving evidence. The committee will also be meeting on Thursday, when the largest labour union in Canada will be appearing.

It is my hope that not only the members of the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce but all honourable senators will attend the meeting tomorrow. I know of few issues that have ever confronted the Canadian people that have been more in question and about which more information has been sought than the proposals of the White Paper. I think the Senate can do a good job in reviewing that document with other Canadians, and making proposals that can be beneficial to all of us. I urge you to attend the meetings of the committee, not only tomorrow but on every occasion upon which you have the opportunity.

Motion agreed to.

The Senate adjourned until Thursday, April 9, at 2 p.m.