

*Government Orders*

from the opposition. It should not ask the opposition to accept being manipulated by the governing party when the institution is being destroyed. Parliament is being destroyed by the governing party today.

That is why Canadians are cynical. Canadians have a profound sense of fair play. It does not matter whether you are talking about a Canadian on the farthest point on the east coast on the craggiest rock in Newfoundland or a Canadian in St. Louis du Ha Ha, Quebec or a Canadian in Prince George, British Columbia. They understand the institution.

They understand that this is the place that belongs to the commoners. It does not belong to the Prime Minister in his ornate chambers at 24 Sussex. It does not belong to the Leader of the Opposition and it does not belong to the leader of the third party. It does not belong to independence. It does not belong to corporate Canada and it does not belong to Bob White.

It belongs to the people. Any time you tear up the rules of Parliament, any time you take short-cuts in Parliament, any time you say that hundreds of years of tradition of Parliament can be done away with, you do not short-change the opposition. You do not-short change corporate Canada.

• (1820 )

You don't short-change the Canadian Federation of Labour. You don't short-change me. You short-change the people, because it is their institution. It is their Chamber, to ensure that their voice is heard and they have a chance to comment on the decisions of the governing party of the day.

The governing party of the day regrettably for the country—a country in desperate need of leadership on the constitutional front, a country in desperate need of leadership on the economic front— does not have the confidence of the people. Even as a member of the opposition, one who wants to replace the governing party, I say it is regrettable for Canada that at this time in our history only 14 per cent or 12 per cent or 8 per cent of Canadians have confidence in the government of the day.

What does this government do? Does it attempt to lay bare before the people of Canada its agenda? Does it attempt to persuade the people of Canada and the elected representatives of the people of Canada of the

value of its agenda? Does it say that it has a vision for Canada and such a profound belief in our vision for Canada that we are prepared to debate it and to defend it?

No. It uses the tyranny of the majority. It uses the temporary trust given to this party as a consequence of an election two and a half or three years ago to bulldoze its legislative measures through the Parliament of Canada, to deny the people of Canada a chance to be heard, to deny the elected representatives of the people of Canada—not an opportunity to speak, but their obligation to speak, their responsibility to be heard in the proper examination of bills.

We may as well be blunt in this Chamber. What do we have? We have in Canada today the worst possible combination of governmental systems. We have a Prime Minister who wants a presidential system, a Prime Minister who wants to rule with absolute power and who assumes that the members of the Conservative Party are automatically supporters of every government measure, a Prime Minister who takes for granted that the members of the Conservative Party will support any and every government measure, a Prime Minister who sees not a Parliament with all it entails but sees purely a majority, a Prime Minister who has hauled off the velvet glove and exposed a brutal fist of a party with a majority in a parliamentary system, and who wants to behave in a presidential fashion.

However, a president who attempts to act in that fashion has imposed upon him the checks and balances of a congressional system. He is subject to the veto of a congressional system. There is no veto in this place. The greatest power belonging to the people in this place is the power of public opinion. The only ability the opposition has to represent the people is through Question Period and debate. We do not have the ability to out-vote the government. No matter what is proposed, we do not have the ability to stop the government. Only an appeal to public opinion, only in examining legislation in detail to point out its flaws and suggest improvements and put pressure on the government through an appeal to public opinion can opposition parliamentarians influence the government.

We cannot out-vote the government. No matter what it proposes, we can only expose its program and examine it.