

*Procedure and Organization*

who are determined to ride roughshod over the will of the people. That is what has happened.

Last Tuesday we who sit opposite the government witnessed something very disturbing as the government house leader gave notice of closure. The mask of democratic leadership slipped suddenly from the face of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) who sat revealed as a man of supercilious arrogance with mockery in his face. He sat there while the three opposition leaders made their statements. Then, in a house dazed by the shock of the government's action, he rose and, turning his back on parliament in an ultimate gesture of contempt, he made his nonchalant way out of the chamber. Those of us who witnessed it will not forget it. It will take many, many oceans of words to sweep away that expression. It will take much more than words; it will take a great deal of action to obliterate that.

**An hon. Member:** That is right.

**Mrs. MacInnis:** The hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Hogarth) mentioned the fact that some members have been here in this chamber too long. That is probably true, but some of us are concerned about those who have not been here long enough to know the traditions of this house. In the Prime Minister we have a man who up until four years ago had had no parliamentary experience whatever, a man who had no feel for the traditions of parliamentary government, a man who would brook no opposition to his will. He was chosen by the members of his party because they felt he could lead them to victory at the polls. He did. But it is a hollow victory for the party today, and it is a bleak day for the Canadian people.

The Canadian people gave this government power because they believed that the new Prime Minister, a man of undoubted intelligence and charm, would use power wisely and responsibly and in the best interests of the whole population. But now, in one short year, we see what has happened. The first duty of the government is to protect and strengthen the instrument of parliament itself. A democratic parliament requires a strong opposition, for the job of the opposition is vital to protect the public. There are grievances to be raised and wrongs to be righted. There are minorities with viewpoints to be safeguarded. There are dangers and shortcomings in government policies to be criticized and removed. There are alternative policies to be enunciated and publicized.

Without this, parliament becomes nothing but a dead shell of once living democracy where the government leader tramples on the remaining vestiges of freedom while eloquently assuring the people that he is building participatory democracy and a just society.

We of the opposition parties have done all we could to prevent this happening. We shall continue in the months ahead or in the weeks ahead in our efforts to prevent this happening and to see that the trend is reversed.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mrs. MacInnis:** Mr. Speaker, influential sections of the press and the media are determined that this shall not happen. People are slowly but very surely beginning to realize that something is very wrong in this house, in this debate. They are beginning to ask questions. These questions are sifting in through letters, editorials and news items in the press. Questions of this nature are asked: Why, when the government has completed all its legislative program for the session is it necessary to bring in rule 75c to choke and gag the opposition? Why do they want to weaken the opposition if an opposition is necessary for good government? Why do they want to get rid of criticism of their policies if their policies are so good and meet the needs of today? Why, if they are anxious to get ahead with legislation, do they propose not to call parliament until October 22, three whole months from now?

The hon. member for New Westminster told us the government has policies in line with the requirements of the people of Canada and that they are programming legislation to meet the needs of the people in this country. Let me tell you this. Programming is no substitute for the failure during a whole year to introduce the kind of legislation that the people of this country want, need, and are crying for. Let me ask this question. Does programming for the next year include improved legislation to help veterans and their families?

● (10:50 p.m.)

**An hon. Member:** Yes.

**Mrs. MacInnis:** Then, why was it not done a year ago? Does it include legislation to help people on old age pensions? Will it help the superannuated civil servants? Will it include measures to assist people who do not have jobs? Will it include measures to assist families on low income to buy the houses they