

But instead of being able to examine the range of problems affecting us, as the Bélanger-Campeau Commission and even the Allaire Report did, Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister allowed us to examine only one small point, the amending formula.

Mr. Speaker, if we really want to have what it takes to save Canada, which should ultimately be the responsibility of the Parliament of Canada, we should at least be able to have an all-party parliamentary committee that would have to look at all constitutional issues. Why is the Prime Minister still trying to deal with the Constitution behind closed doors? It is the same kind of attitude we find today with changing the Standing Orders of the House. It is an attempt to silence the minorities in Parliament.

The fact that he has the nerve to go ahead with a motion of closure, Mr. Speaker, is another expression of the contempt that he is showing for Parliament. Perhaps he could help me say it in French, but it shows contempt.

[English]

Introducing closure exposes the contempt that the Prime Minister has for Parliament, that on this most fundamental issue of our right to speak here in the Canadian Parliament. He does not care what minorities have to say. He does not care what the opposition parliamentarians have to say. We can see the evidence of contempt as he introduces closure at a time when we as minority members of Parliament want to have our right to speak.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member will have six minutes remaining after we come back from royal assent.

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THE ROYAL ASSENT

A message was delivered by the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod as follows:

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Deputy to the Governor General desires the immediate attendance of this honourable House in the chamber of the honourable the Senate.

Royal Assent

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker with the House went up to the Senate chamber.

• (1620)

And being returned:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I have the honour to inform the House that when the House went up to the Senate chamber the Deputy Governor General was pleased to give, in Her Majesty's name, the Royal Assent to the following bills:

Bill C-79, an act to amend the Parliament of Canada Act—Chapter No. 20.

Bill C-93, an act to amend the Bretton Woods and Related Agreements Act—Chapter No. 21.

Bill C-98, an act authorizing agreements between the Government of Canada and the provinces to provide for protection for the income of producers of agricultural products and to enable the Government of Canada to take additional measures for that purpose—Chapter No. 22.

Bill C-97, an act to provide borrowing authority—Chapter No. 23.

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[Translation]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Andre (p. 19027) and amendment of Mr. Dingwall (P. 19156).

Mme Copps: Mr. Speaker, I did welcome the interruption, and I will tell you why. On our way to the other place, the member for Abitibi told us the real reason why the Tories want these amendments to Standing Orders. Do you know what he said? The hard-working member for Abitibi said in this House that we should somewhat lay off criticizing the new rules because they will give him an extra week off.

An hon. member: A month!

Mme Copps: Yes, a month. That is what he said, Mr. Speaker. The Standing Orders are good because they give him an extra week off every month. How strange to hear the members opposite argue that they need that week to go and work in their riding, when we know that what they really want is to reduce their workload by 25 per cent, earn the same money and be less accountable in this House and across the country.