

*Business of the House*

There are no indications in what the minister said that would prompt us to look forward to necessary changes, the most important which of, in my opinion, would be to have the Standing Orders of the House in step with a Prime Minister who is believed to be young and with it. As a matter of fact, among the changes to be made would be the removal of this stupidity whereby no one knows when sessions begin and end. For several years, I have noticed that in Quebec's provincial legislature—now the National Assembly—as well as in the House of Commons, every succeeding government has been using this little game of blackmail to have bills adopted in a hurry whether they be as monstrous as Bill C-259 or as important for the future of the country as Bill C-176.

• (12 noon)

Mr. Speaker, in my opinion this little game, this questionable tradition still being observed by the government in 1971, is, as I said before, stupid and foolish. And I hope that with the beginning of a new year this badly needed reform of our parliamentary system will be brought about. I also hope that definite dates will be set for the opening and adjournment of sessions and that we will no longer see this ridiculous trick to which governments have resorted up to now. And the dates could be known if there were more rational organization. We would not be witnessing the woeful sight of all those empty benches and the tense faces of hon. members who sat until seven o'clock this morning.

Mr. Speaker, in spite of any assertion to the effect that such a state of things is normal, I repeat that it is absolutely not so. If the government program had included such elementary reforms as methodical ordering and organizing of sessions, if the government knows exactly how long it should take to deal with each bill to be passed during a session, why are we not informed right from the beginning of the session of the order of introduction of bills. It is an elementary reform. And this is a just society! Let us start out by having a just Parliament!

How ridiculous it was, Mr. Speaker, to see all those votes being railroaded through last night. The government voting machine was operating to capacity.

How many government members knew what they were voting for? How many realized that by supporting some of the amendments proposed for Bill C-176 they were voting against this country's farmers? It was not even beneficial, from an electoral point of view, to vote against some of yesterday's amendments. Nevertheless, it was done. Government members as a whole are a voting machine.

We were expecting much better. If the government members are satisfied—I repeat here the views of the people of my riding, views which are shared, I am sure, by all Quebecers and even all Canadians—I would say that when we met our constituents during the Christmas holiday while the Prime Minister was welcoming his Messiah, while we were in our families, our constituents told us: It is crazy, it is stupid! Why do you have to sit between Christmas and New Year?

Why do they make us do that, Mr. Speaker? Because we know very well that in the eyes of the public the opposition is always responsible for delays. The opposition never but never fails to delay the work of the House. And once again, the Prime Minister, the government, the cabi-

net are playing the game. Mr. Speaker, it is intellectual abuse to act this way to make the population believe that the opposition delays the work. And the government tells the public: Since it is evident that the House will not reconvene until February 16 and that we will have elections in April, the opposition has forced us to impose the gag and to sit on December 31.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that if we had a really efficient parliamentary organization, such a situation would not happen and the first measure that could give us that just society which the right hon. Prime Minister is boasting about is the one I just mentioned. He would have shown by this that he was not in favour of partisan politics, and that he put all hon. members on an equal footing whether it was the member for Champlain or for Mount Royal.

All here are equal. By eliminating political partisanship from Parliament, we would witness the real dawn of the advent of the just society since, as representatives of the whole population of this country, we are called upon to realize the parliamentary reforms which are essential if we are to perform well. Therefore I blame the Government for having failed to do it.

What does that mean? Once again the "tax machine" has been set in action. It is always the same thing, Mr. Speaker! In spite of our efforts, our explanations, the truly positive solutions we offered, nothing can be done; the only solution is the "tax machine", and all the laws that have been passed, not to say forced through, all lead to fiscal reform. To what purpose? For the purpose of taxing in order to get an extra billion dollars or two.

Mr. Speaker, many things should have been done, and they were not. Some things were done, and they should never have been done.

Now, since this was a turning point in this session and since it will probably be the main point that will stay in history, I come back to the famous war measures. Upon their passage, the government had us believe in an apprehended insurrection, which was untrue! The government got carried away in order to make some political hay. History, Mr. Speaker, will have its revenge on that!

Another reform omitted by the minister in his "honour list", Mr. Speaker, is that of the Senate. What are we doing here this morning?—We are waiting. What are we waiting for?—We are waiting for the hon. gentlemen in the other place to send the bill back to us, such as it was referred to them, since nothing will be changed in it. This ridiculous waiting prevents us from being with our families on New Year's Eve. What are we waiting for? What changes do the senators want to make in Bill C-176?—We know! It is a ritual, always the same one. We are waiting, and we expect the people to think that this is serious.

Mr. Speaker, I object to such procedures. Normally, I had no intention of coming back to Ottawa this week because I wanted none of this stupidity but I told myself: I must go and tell them that this is stupid because maybe no one ever thought of doing it.

Mr. Speaker, we have been waiting since 1968 for the Messiah and the coming of the just society and what do we get? Justin!

[*English*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?