

*Government Orders*

question the Associate Minister of National Defence, on \$13.2 billion.

After she had finished her opening remarks, the committee of seven members, I think, had about one hour and ten minutes in which to question that minister, who comes before the committee once a year on estimates. Could you imagine this sham, this charade happening in the United States, in the United Kingdom, or in Germany?

We could begin reforms in this House if we had a real supply power in this House to withhold supply. In the German system the Minister of Finance brings in a budget, the budget goes to a budgetary committee of the lower House, that committee has 30 days in which to revise, add to, or subtract from in order to achieve a majority vote in the House. If it does not receive a majority vote, the budget is dead. It does not go back to the Minister of Finance, but is re-written by another committee of the lower House. That original budgetary committee is dissolved. It has no political debts and owes no favours to anyone. When its duty is done it is finished.

Mr. Speaker, I have only 20 minutes today and I think most of my time is gone, if I am not mistaken. I simply wish to sum up by saying that unless we, as members of Parliament take hold of this institution and shake out the cobwebs and get rid of these archaic, irrelevant Standing Orders—and I do not care whether our speeches are five minutes or 50 minutes long, that is not the issue—. The issue is that this should be a legislative body, where bills are truly initiated. The Executive has no business being part of the legislative process.

We could have an Executive outside this House with 10 Cabinet ministers for policy direction and the formulation of policy. The bills should be initiated in subcommittees and committees, be passed in this House, and not be based stringently on partisan political lines. The people of this country are fed up with partisanship. They are fed up with us scoring brownie points in debate here. All we are is a pale reflection or imitation of the Oxford Union 50 years ago. My God, if that is not an indictment of this body as a legislative body, I do not know what is.

We have to change our ways or our ways are going to be changed for us. We are going to lose what minuscule

influence on the legislative process we now have. Then I am confident and convinced that the yelling, the screaming, the lack of decorum, and the way we act like chimpanzees—and I am sorry to insult chimpanzees when I say that—because Question Period is a jungle and a zoo, would disappear or certainly dissipate. After all, when you have no power and no influence and no clout and are paid \$100,000 a year, what is left to do but to get up and scream, shout and holler. I am disgusted.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Debate. The hon. member for Scarborough—Rouge River.

I would like to inform the House that, under Standing Order 57, there are no questions or comments from now until 1 a.m.

**Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to continue the debate on the rule changes now before Parliament. They have been proposed in a way and are now are in the process of being imposed, I think, now that the government has invoked closure.

The rule changes here do not follow the same procedure as a piece of legislation would follow in the House of Commons. When the rules change this time it will happen on one reading, so to speak. That approach is very different from a bill, because these pieces of legislation are reviewed two or three times at committee and in the House before finally being approved.

I heard the remarks of the last hon. member and I enjoyed them. However, I would like to separate myself from the portions of the remarks that apologised for some of the rough edges in our democracy. I think democracy should have a few rough edges. We have rules that reflect some of those rough edges.

I recently noted that the member for Gander—Grand Falls pointed out that the reasons why the benches down here in the House are not capable of being moved up closer or rearranged is because we have to have two sword lengths between the front benches. That is a manifestation of the reality that things can become a bit rough and tumble once in a while in a democracy. I would not want to see it tidied up so much that we could not have some real aggressive debate.