

Again, having had some experience in committees, I am quite apprehensive about the extension of television to committees. I am prepared to make a prediction. Committees are now basically doing pretty good work in a non-partisan way. I am apprehensive that when we get the old camera in the committees it is going to foul up and affect in an adverse way committee work.

Another funny thing happened on the way to the circus and some members have mentioned it, that the ham will monopolize the camera. That is why this place is in disrepute: perhaps there are too many hams here and the hams will be in the committee. Members may not appreciate that there is no doubt the penetrating eye of the television camera cuts through an awful lot of floss and gloss and, if it is not real and relevant, the camera shows it, the spectator sees it or the viewer sees it.

I just point out that perhaps it is a matter of typing me in terms of time. Even good old Carol Burnett and her comedy hour—she has had a rehabilitation and has come back in another way; it is a great half-hour now I think—only lasted for 10 years. Finally the old camera saw enough and people had a change.

I am very concerned about television in the committees. I am not too consistent in saying that I know it has to be here in the House and why not perhaps in the committees. I do think it will adversely affect committees. I think members have to be very careful as they appear before the screen, whether it is before a committee and/or here, because that penetrating eye can leave quite an impression. That is on television.

I am glad the parliamentary secretary to the House leader is here. I know the opposition has used the general broad brush of total Draconian, Fascist, rape of Parliament. Everyone is referring to the generalities of the calendar and all those things, some of which I have mentioned and some have some good points. However, I am very sad that the opposition instead of just forcing the government to use closure, which will be its natural right to do in time, in effect did not focus more on this debate to try to get some changes even at this late date. One element in the rule changes that is going to affect this place more adversely as far as individual members

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are concerned is the clause on unanimous consent and its disposition under this new projected rule.

It is interesting to me. I know there are not too many government members around today and I can understand why.

An hon. member: They are hanging their heads in shame.

Mr. Nowlan: No, I do not think so, but they are prepared not to fill the docket and they want the debate to conclude.

I have in front of me in my hand the memorandum the government House leader sent to the PC caucus, which did not come to me directly. It is dated March 26 and is a good summary of the rule changes. On the one that I just referred to, if I read this and had not been around here for a little while, I guarantee that nine-tenths of the government members do not appreciate the effect of this change on consent of the House. In the list there are other things mentioned: closure, time allocation, recorded divisions, quorum, and extension of sitting. On the consent of the House, it is written in the explanation, "on matters of House sittings and activities of committees 25 members rising during Routine Proceedings can prevent adoption, not applicable to changing other Standing Orders".

I do not think it was done intentionally, but that is almost one of the most misleading explanations of the potential effect of this change in the unanimous consent that I could ever believe. I am suggesting that I take exception to the Speaker's ruling yesterday when, on the point of order raised by the member for Kamloops on the unanimous consent part, the Speaker mentioned in his explanation that this is very restricted. I do not accept that, Mr. Speaker. This business of unanimous consent is not restricted. The suggested Standing Order says in paragraph 56(1)(b):

For the purposes of this Standing Order, "routine motions" shall be understood to mean any motion, made upon Routine Proceedings, which may be required for the observance of the proprieties of the House, the maintenance of the authority, the management of its business, the arrangement of its proceedings, the establishing of the powers of its committees, the correctness of its records or the fixing of its sitting days or the times of its meeting or adjournment.