

House of Commons Procedures

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Nesbitt: Some of them won't be there at all.

Mr. Pugh: I am glad of that interjection, but for each and every one of them who might be re-elected I point out that these beautiful restrictions cannot but redound to their consternation. It would be interesting to see those hon. Members in Opposition just as I saw Liberals in Opposition between 1958 and 1962, and in particular those four horse-men of that era. They did not break the rules; they just went on talking even when Mr. Speaker was on his feet. They got their point across and, believe me, the large majority which we Conservatives had at that time showed the utmost in forbearance.

This picture of the President of the Privy Council on the front page of the *Star* is not a bad one.

Mr. McIlraith: Send it over.

Mr. Pugh: I suggest he buy all the remaining copies of today's issue of the *Toronto Star* that he can find and take what he said to heart. If he feels what he has said is anything less than blackmail, then I ask him to remember the flag debate when this House was blackmailed through a long, hot summer to no effect whatever.

By accepting this limitation of time on debate we will make ourselves subject to an autocratic bureaucracy. There is concrete, simple evidence of that written in red, the Liberal colour, and in black and white in today's *Star*, and I say it will be a black day if this legislation goes through in its present form. It will allow these political autocrats to say, "We are not cutting debate. Oh, no, we are not bringing in closure. We are not using a guillotine, not a bit of it. We are only following the rules of the House." I ask Liberal backbenchers and all Members of the Opposition to wake up. Do not let this thing go through in its present form. This is wrong and should not be accepted by the House.

Going back to a few words which the Prime Minister used in his initial speech and turning them a little inside out—he did not say this exactly—I say to him that this is a first step in legal tyranny and intolerance the result of which can only be friction and fury on the part of the Opposition. I believe this; otherwise I would not be saying it. We have it in red, black and white in today's *Star*.

[Mr. Pugh.]

In this debate on time limitation I think it is wise for us to examine some legislation passed in our recent Parliamentary history which bears out what I am saying. An example is the flag debate. In it the Government said "Look, we have got a mandate to bring in a brand new flag." I do not agree with that statement, but the House sweated for 22 days denying that we should have a flag such as was suggested by the Government on a take it or leave it basis when they said: "You take our flag with two blue bars and three maple leaves and if you do not take it, then, by George, you are going to stay here all summer".

We had that threat just as we have a threat by the President of the Privy Council in today's *Toronto Star*. If we had had limitation of debate during the flag discussion I point out we would not have the proud flag that is flying over the Parliament buildings today. We would have one with two blue bars and three maple leaves—

An hon. Member: Order.

Mr. Pugh: Order, my neck—the personal choice of the bureaucrats on the opposite side who said "take it or leave it".

● (8:20 p.m.)

Let me deal with the pension plan and what would have happened if we had had limitation of debate during discussion of it. The hon. lady would have had that Government in the worst possible mess this country has ever seen, for she denied the practical consensus of actuaries and economists throughout Canada. By George, I want to point out—here I am, using the first name of the President of the Privy Council, which shows how much the article in the *Star* has affected me—that had the plan gone through in its original form Canada would have suffered in dollars and cents; it would have suffered in its provincial relationships and it would have suffered from a lousy pension plan. I use the word "lousy" because Churchill used it on a number of occasions. It was only because a united Opposition stood to its guns that the Government was forced to retreat and start again. I could think of many other instances but I will not mention them at this time because attention has been called to them by other Members.

I was interested in the way in which the hon. Member for Rosthern (Mr. Nasserden) had to fight in the House the other day to put his views forward. They were most telling. This Government has a history of leaping before