

*Supply*

become more modern, more realistic and better adjusted to the Canadian reality, as well as more human and more productive. As we have seen in its most recent report, the committee itself is looking for more ways to enable Parliament to be more productive so that, as I mentioned earlier, we may pass the legislation required at a time when our society has been changing and expects more from us, and on the other hand, to allow a healthy opposition and comprehensive but not obstructive debates on the various measures submitted to Parliament. In addition, I hope that the present experiment will lead towards the improvement of our institution, and at the same time, I repeat that it is not contradictory—

● (1140)

[English]

—it is absolutely not contradictory to say that as Parliament becomes more efficient it would mean that we do not want any opposition to be able to debate fully but not in a dilatory fashion.

In conclusion, I want to say that I have great hopes for this experiment. I hope that in the future Parliament will be able to cope with reality through new measures and new attitudes that will make it possible for this institution to become more human, more modern and productive and at the same time preserve the right of the Opposition to debate.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Do any Hon. Members rise to ask questions of the President of the Privy Council?

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, I have two questions for the Government House Leader. The first refers to the quotation from the Constitution Act, 1867. He made reference to the term “next session”. Would he not agree that the term “next session” infers a new session of Parliament?

**Mr. Pinard:** Mr. Speaker, that is what I have argued. If we are talking law, I submit the burden would be on the one alleging that the next session should be a new session. The essence of the debate is whether there is a requirement for a new session or not. My hon. colleague referred to the Constitution Act, 1867 and seems to conclude that because there is an expression “next session” in the old Constitution, it would necessarily require a new session.

I do not want to repeat myself but I have given examples of occasions in the past when a session of Parliament lasted more than one year. Very good parliamentary minds like those of the Right Hon. John G. Diefenbaker, Ged Baldwin and others never argued that those sessions were unconstitutional.

In the context of the old Constitution it is not said that there must be a new session. In taking into consideration those precedents and the letter of the Constitution, it does not speak of a new session; and the burden of demonstrating that there must be a new session every year is on those alleging that there must be a new session every year. That burden has not been met. It is my submission that it is absolutely unacceptable to conclude that this session is unconstitutional at this time.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Hon. Member for Simcoe North on a supplementary question.

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, moving from the legal or technical interpretation of why we need a new session, I have another question for the Government House Leader. I suggest to him that, in words of Lester Pearson as he spoke to the Empire Club in 1959, there is no obligation on the Opposition to bring forward legislative programs while they are in Opposition; that could be done during an election campaign. I throw those words back at the Government House Leader because they come from the Right Hon. Lester Pearson, a leader of his Party.

Since we are dealing with a three-year-old Throne Speech, let us get away from the legal and technical interpretation. What is there in that Throne Speech that he has not brought forward, and which he wants to, which would do something about jobs? We on this side of the House are concerned that unemployment over the course of that three-year-old Throne Speech has gone from 7.5 per cent to 12.5 per cent, and I can tell the Hon. Member that for my purposes, not as Party policy, I would be very pleased if he would prorogue and bring in a Throne Speech which dealt only with that one issue, jobs. I say that not as policy, but for my purposes he could bring in a Throne Speech and just talk about jobs and how the Government is going to get this country back to work, and what it is going to do for the over two million Canadians out of work.

● (1150)

**Mr. Pinard:** Mr. Speaker, first the Hon. Member referred to the obligation or non-obligation of an Opposition Party to propose legislative changes or policies. I do not think anyone on our side ever said that debate, to be efficient or responsible, should always be negative. I believe there is room in an institution like ours for constructive debate, and sometimes constructive debate means alternatives and different proposals which are weighed against those proposals of the Government. That is exactly what I was deploring, that during the last three years I have not witnessed very often new proposals, ideas and policies proposed by the Official Opposition. On the contrary, because of the lack of ideas, the Official Opposition had to obstruct, and this is the kind of position I have denounced very often in the past and which I keep denouncing. I think it is childish, irresponsible and absolutely unacceptable from the Loyal Opposition of Her Majesty the Queen.

I see my good colleague for Victoria (Mr. McKinnon) seems to be very happy I said that. I have a lot of respect for him. The sovereign of other countries and our country—

**Miss MacDonald:** She happens to be the sovereign of our country.

**Mr. Pinard:** Yes, I agree, and I would like to complete my sentence. I am sorry that the Hon. Member for—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** I hesitate to interrupt the Minister, but there are other Members seeking to ask questions and the