

ing the Senate, but the circumstances now are such that it would appear the House of Commons needs reform.

In the attempts to prorogue Parliament we have seen undue delay and many annoying incidents, resulting in added expense to the country, as well as expense and inconvenience to about 340 members. These experiences are becoming too frequent, and surely some method can be devised that will preclude their repetition.

The King's representative is requested by the head of the Government to be in readiness at an approximate time to dissolve Parliament. To many, especially those in the crowded galleries, it means much to see the brilliant pageant, the officers of the militia, naval and air forces, all resplendent in their uniforms, accompanying His Excellency. To say the least, it is somewhat discourteous that His Excellency should have to be informed there has been a false alarm; but when this is repeated several times in a few hours it can only be described as a contretemps.

The right honourable gentleman who leads this House spoke very plainly a few days ago respecting the annoying delays occasioned by the translation vendetta between officials of the two Houses, and we have hopes that his strongly expressed resentment will result in a better situation in that particular branch of the public service.

This matter of prorogation should, I believe, be considered of at least equal importance, and I respectfully submit to the right honourable gentleman that he might suggest to the Prime Minister when the legislative programme is being prepared that Bills likely to be more or less contentious should be introduced during the early part of the session, and minor legislation should follow. If this suggestion were adopted, benefit would, I am sure, accrue to the country and to all concerned. As the custom is now, members come here early in the year fresh and ready for business, but work is carried on in a desultory manner and much time is lost. Then, when the warm weather approaches and members become restless and impatient, the most important bills are presented for their consideration during extra and longer sittings. It would appear therefore that if the usual order were reversed better consideration could be given to legislation, with the result that time, money and energy would be utilized to the best advantage.

We witness to-day, by the slim attendance in both Houses, what the present system involves. Many members left on late trains Saturday night, believing that Parliament

would be prorogued before midnight. This situation was accentuated by the fact that the Chief Accountant of the other House had paid the members the balance of their indemnities. But the Chief Accountant of the Senate—he must be Scotch!—is cautious. He is waiting until everything is over before issuing cheques.

Right Hon. Mr. MFIGHEN: Honourable members, while not wishing to be in any way derogatory of the honourable member's complaint, I may intimate that I have heard something of the same nature before. This is to be said of what he has suggested, that it has already taken effect, but has not proved a complete cure.

It is true that towards the end of sessions—this one notably, others as well—exasperating and unexpected delays occur, accompanied by confusion, if not discourtesy as respects the representative of the Throne. Nevertheless, this is inherent in the liberties we have. These liberties would have to be curtailed, and curtailed in a manner which I know would bring the stoutest and most persistent opposition, before anything in the nature of control could be obtained.

We have now not two parties, but, speaking roughly, four. This involves a certain lack of discipline or of such control on the part of a few members as was possible under the bi-party system. This is one ingredient of the situation.

Another ingredient is this. Our closure system is a slow working device. It does not enable all the legislative work to be accomplished within a certain time. I know of no way to cure the situation of which the honourable gentleman complains, and make sure it is cured, except such a system as has been found essential in France, in the United States, and in England. I am not saying that the difficulties we encounter are such that the time has come when the more drastic procedure would be justified.

As to bringing down contentious measures earlier, that cure was wholly applied this session, if ever, and I think it can be said it was applied also last session. Not only contentious measures, but those that had any prospect of being contentious, were introduced at an early stage. The Bank of Canada Bill came to us last, but it was introduced in the other House early in February. The difficulty is, there are not less than twenty-three banking and financial experts in the Commons, while we have only one. This is a great truth which the honourable member should fully compre-