

*Procedure and Organization*

operation? Has the government house leader told them, particularly the new members in the backbenches, about all these things? Are they aware of this? I would like to disclose something which may or may not be a secret not disclosed to the caucus of other parties. Some members are beginning to feel we co-operate too much and that we were not elected to provide all this co-operation to the government. How much further are we to go before government members consider that they are receiving co-operation from the opposition?

The case for the need for rule 75c has yet to be presented. No evidence has been provided of opposition obstruction or delay. Until such time as irrefutable evidence is presented, this government, be it majority or any other kind, has no right to expect this opposition, the public of Canada or the news media to accept their case for the need for a rule such as 75c. There may be some reasonable argument, although I do not agree, that debate on two items of legislation in this session lasted an inordinate length of time. It could be argued by some that the debate on the omnibus bill took too long. I happened to feel, at one stage, that debate was taking too long. I have some reason to think the majority of opposition members felt the same way. Rule 75B, Mr. Speaker, would have taken care of that situation very nicely.

I would not for one moment say that the members of the party to my left were not entitled to express their opinions as fully, and as often as they could on matters on which they spoke out of their own conscience and beliefs. I could be wrong, but it seemed to me that the three other parties in this house felt the debate had gone on for long enough. Rule 75B would have taken care of that situation quite well.

It could be argued that, at one stage, the debate on the language bill took too long. I have a feeling that 75B would have taken care of that very nicely. In my opinion, these facts add more weight to the argument I am trying to put forward to the effect that rule 75c is not needed by this government. Until such time as they can provide the evidence that it is needed, the government has no business bringing it into this house.

The government forgets that the opposition in this parliament is very diverse. It is seldom that we have a united opposition. The debates on many of the pieces of legislation so far brought into this house in this session have surely shown this. The three opposition

[Mr. Benjamin.]

parties have taken turns voting with the government on various amendments or stages of legislation. This opposition is diverse, but on this issue it is united. Rule 75c is neither needed nor wanted. It is not necessary. The fact that this government brings in 75c indicates to me, and I believe to many people in Canada, a fundamental weakness in this government. They cry; they are born losers. They have their majority, but they are afflicted with something else; they have the imagination of a doorknob. They have yet to bring in legislation which no opposition would dare obstruct or delay. Most of the legislation they have brought in so far was not worth obstructing or delaying. There are two indications of the weakness of the government. The Criminal Code bill and the languages bill were old Pearson stuff, hangovers from the former Minister of Justice and from the Criminal Code debates in several previous parliaments.

• (8:10 p.m.)

These two weaknesses are illustrated by what has happened. The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) gets up during the question period and cries that the opposition are not presenting alternatives. He wonders what the point of view of the opposition is. Hell's bells, Mr. Speaker, hon. members opposite are the government. Why do they not present legislation to this parliament? We are still waiting, and this country is still waiting. We have been dealing with a lot of things that were not too important to the national interest, legislation which, by itself, may have been important in a very small area. We are still waiting. Bring in these bills. Where is the legislation in respect of subsidized interest rates for low income families? The government would be surprised how fast that legislation would go through, and the amount of co-operation they would receive. How about dealing with a silly, little old thing such as the box car situation? Such a little old bill would go through in a day, with unanimous consent. They would not need 75c in order to do something about that problem.

If this government would bring in legislation to do something about all the problems that confront this country now, they would not have to worry about the length of debate. Such legislation would go through so fast that most members over there would not have an opportunity to speak on it. In essence, what I am suggesting to the government is that they should try us, and they should try the people of Canada. Give us a chance to see what the