

Government Orders

will be returned to the committees and to the proper stages for full consideration, and that the precedent of ramming these things down our throats will be stopped.

There are many other things I could refer to, but I see there are many colleagues who wish to join me in this debate. I thank you for the opportunity to ask the government to stop what it is doing and to reconsider the arbitrary nature of the new rules of the House of Commons.

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take advantage of this opportunity to join in the debate this evening with my colleagues from Winnipeg, Kingston and The Islands and with others in the House.

We see the decision by the government today to put this motion before the House as the confirmation of the destruction, and that is what it is, of our parliamentary system of government.

We have heard a lot of talk in the last few weeks, including discussion in the throne speech—

Mr. Walker: On a point of order. Could the Speaker indicate who is representing the government in the House right now?

An hon. member: Riding roughshod over Parliament.

Mr. Hawkes: Mr. Speaker, I think it is against the rules and precedents of this House to call attention to the presence or absence of members. The previous comment was out of order, I believe.

Mr. Dionne: It is also mandatory that a minister of the Crown be in his seat at all times when Parliament is in session.

An hon. member: Hear, hear.

An hon. member: All afternoon there has been no minister in this Chamber.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): On the same point of order, the hon. member for Annapolis Valley—Hants.

Mr. Nowlan: Mr. Speaker, I just want to confirm and support completely my hon. friend from Northumberland—Miramichi.

The nerve of the government Whip. He has a lot of nerve, and he can use it in his own government caucus. We are debating the motion before the House, which is a

complete abrogation of tradition and history of this House.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Order! I think members from both sides have had an opportunity to raise points of order and messages were sent back and forth. The hon. member for Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte has the floor again.

[*English*]

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, I think the points of order that have been raised illustrate the point that I tried to make at the beginning of my speech. That is the following.

Parliament is being systematically destroyed by the government. Canadians watching this debate are wondering what the fuss is. The Government of Canada has introduced a motion putting a series of bills that died on the Order Paper at various stages of progress in the last Parliament before this Parliament, after a new throne speech, and has deemed those bills to be reintroduced at whatever position or progress they had made in the last Parliament.

In hundreds of years of evolution of parliamentary government, such a motion has never been put before any parliament anywhere in the British parliamentary system because it is a form of executive dictatorship.

It is a government saying: "It does not matter whether Parliament has proposed,"—government proposes and Parliament disposes—"we are going to introduce these bills. We are going to deem them to have been already considered by this Parliament and we are going to dispose of them in advance of a proper examination of the legislative matters put before the Parliament of Canada."

This government has been talking about trying to introduce a measure of civility into Parliament. It is trying to introduce a measure of non-partisanship in Parliament. That is what it has talked about. What it is really talking about is: Will you give a particular party, the governing party, a break? Will you be gentle as we go into the night with a particular party, the governing party?

This governing party should not ask for gentleness from the opposition. It should not ask for understanding from the opposition. It should not ask for compliance