

Procedure and Organization

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): It is not very serious, Mr. Speaker, but the interpreter does not hear the hon. member who is speaking. I do not know why, but the simultaneous translation system is not working. If it were possible to re-establish communications, we would be very grateful.

[English]

Mr. Woolliams: Before I was interrupted, Mr. Speaker, I was going to quote what the present Prime Minister said in one of the first speeches he made on February 27, 1968, reported at page 7042 of *Hansard*. In answer to the then hon. member for Calgary North he said:

We are masters of the house in the sense that we have to conduct the affairs of government.

When the right hon. gentleman took over the leadership of the Liberal party he said: "I am going to be master as soon as I get a majority in this country". It is he who is using members of parliament and the President of the Privy Council to pilot through this kind of measure.

Let me refer to another statement of the Prime Minister, one I have quoted on other occasions, made in February, 1963 before he was even a Liberal. Let us also remember that the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton was not always a Liberal. At that time the right hon. gentleman was attacking the Liberal party for their opportunism and expediency, and he said their philosophy was:

Say anything, think anything you like. But put us in power, because we are best fitted to govern.

As he said, the political philosophy of the Liberal party is simplicity itself. That is the attitude that is behind these proposed rules.

Mr. Peters: And they believe that.

Mr. Woolliams: Yes, they do. I am not surprised, as a member of the opposition, that the right hon. gentleman stated "We are the masters of this house", because on a former occasion before he had joined the party he had criticized that same party's philosophy of:

Say anything, think anything you like. But put us in power, because we are best fitted to govern.

When the Canadian people give the Liberal party a majority, the Liberals become drunk with power. This is the reason they are proposing these rules.

I turn now to some of the arguments that were made this afternoon. Proposed rule 75c states:

A minister of the crown who from his place in the house at a previous sitting has stated that an

[The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard).]

agreement could not be reached under the provisions of Standing Order 75A or 75B in respect of proceedings at the stage at which a public bill was then under consideration—

Stopping there, if no agreement is reached under 75A, and 75B, which is pretty ambiguous, is not put into operation, the government can move in with their guillotine rule 75c.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Woolliams: The backbenchers in the Liberal party applaud. The adoption of this rule would mean that they would be even more silent in the next two or three years than they have been in the first year of parliament. This guillotine rule will operate just as effectively against them as against opposition members. They should be on our side, not on the side of this all-powerful cabinet.

The government is saying, in effect, that in the absence of agreement under 75A or 75B, the government will bring down the guillotine rule 75c. In other words, that remains as an ever present threat that hangs over the leaders of the major parties if they cannot reach agreement. The house leader of the Liberal party, this all-powerful baron in the House of Commons, is saying that unless agreement is reached under 75A or the formula of 75B is adopted, the government will bring into operation 75c. The government wants not only to use this rule but to abuse its implementation in the sense that it will use it to destroy any chance of real consultation. How can there be consultation, Mr. Speaker, when we are blackmailed into either agreeing or being guillotined? That would be the position if these rules were adopted.

The hon. member for Grenville-Carleton said this afternoon that there is nothing really bad at all about 75c. He said that if no agreement is reached under 75A or 75B, debate can continue for ten days. The hon. member for Grenville-Carleton no doubt is a senior member of parliament.

• (9:30 p.m.)

An hon. Member: He is still wet behind the ears.

Mr. Woolliams: I continue quoting proposed rule 75c. The nub of it is contained in the part I am about to read:

—in respect of proceedings at the stage at which a public bill was then under consideration either in the House or in any committee and has given notice at that sitting of his intention so to do may propose a motion for the purpose of allotting a