

*Summer Recess*

liked to show more strength, but this changes nothing in the role of the opposition. What is important when you express an idea is the strength of your argument.

It does not matter how long nor how vigorously they argue, it will not change a thing. I think their leader expressed the views of their party quite clearly and what was said after was just a rehash. It does not matter whether we stay here a year, a month or a week longer. What the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) said on the government side does not change the situation either. It is like a dog running after its tail. I do not think we are getting anywhere by staring at each other here on this Friday July 17 at 7.30 p.m. when we could be doing some concrete work.

Finally, I would add that it is not by sitting here, by making speeches like the one I am now making that we are going to change the country or make interest rates go down. That is for sure. I remember that when the opposition party was in power, we had to increase productivity. What is happening today? Our productivity is certainly not excessive. And I remember also that when we had 14 per cent interest rates, it was the party across the way which renewed the mandate of the head of the Bank of Canada for another seven years: It was the government of the day which confirmed the president of the Bank of Canada in his position. If we want action, if we want to find formulas, it is not by arguing as we have been doing for the past five hours now that we will do it. In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I ask that the guillotine be applied, for lack of anything better, but that as early as the next session, we really get down to work in order to find rules much more appropriate not to the twentieth century but to the twenty-first century ahead.

[English]

**Hon. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with some interest to the speeches this afternoon. If one listened to them and looked them over, one could lump together the hon. member for Manicouagan (Mr. Maltais) and the hon. member for Rimouski-Témiscouata (Mrs. Côté) who both seemed terribly dissatisfied with the rules of this House. I wonder who they think brought them here. The rules of this House were brought in with closure by a Liberal government. It took the spending authority out of the House. That is when this House lost its authority, effectiveness and responsibility.

That is one of the main reasons for the small attendance in the House these days. Besides, this is the dinner hour. The hon. member should not think that the shortage of personnel belongs to only one party in this House. I recall to his memory the last time, and it was a very rare occasion, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) decided to speak to us, and over 100 Liberals were absent from their places.

**Mr. McKnight:** I don't blame them. It was a terrible speech.

**Mr. Maltais:** When was that?

**Mr. McKinnon:** If the hon. member cannot remember when the Prime Minister spoke, he may have been one of those who were absent.

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** The hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Dubois) on a point of order.

**Mr. Dubois:** I would like the hon. member to give us the specific date and time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** That may be something the hon. member would like to know or ask to the hon. member for Victoria (Mr. McKinnon), but first, it is not a point of order, and second, I should like to remind the hon. member that the hon. member for Victoria is not required to answer in one way or the other.

[English]

**Mr. McKinnon:** I can only say that I endured the Prime Minister's speech on that date. When I spoke shortly after, I pointed out that there had only been 42 Liberal members present. I believe that leaves over 100 members absent. I will look up the date and give it to the hon. member. I obviously do not have time now to look it up.

I suppose it would be fair to say that this adjournment debate actually started over a week ago when the motion respecting the summer recess was introduced by the government House leader. Adjournment debates are often looked upon as opportunities to review the performance of governments. Time never permits it to be done comprehensively or in detail. Therefore, I can only speak of a few of this government's many faults.

First let us turn to the atmosphere in the House. In my eight and a half years here I have never seen anything like it. It has been an extraordinarily long session. Much of the time has been spent in the struggle between the official opposition and the government over the arbitrariness of the government. The struggle has had two quite disparate facets. One was the Constitution debate. The other was a grouping of items which could only be put under the heading of general incompetence of the government. It surfaced as a national energy program, an ineffective budget, the uranium cartel, the paranoia about hiding information, and the cessation of mail service.

● (1930)

The struggle concerning the Constitution resulted in a victory for the Official Opposition when the government finally agreed that the Supreme Court of Canada should have an opportunity to look at the legality of the course the government was set upon. Had it not been for the determined stand of the Official Opposition, the Constitution question would long since have been sent to another country for amending, with the amendments not having been provided by the several parts of this confederation but by the federal Liberal Party only. What a travesty of federalism!