

*Procedure and Organization*

the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie) who expressed really peaceful and logical opinions. I had such high hopes that I told myself that, during this week, the house could adjourn, after having come to an agreement.

I did not intend to take part in the debate, letting the hon. members who are more familiar than I am with the rules discuss, on its merits, the motion of the chairman of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization, presented to the house on June 20 last. But, as the report recommends that the rules be amended in order to insert, immediately after Standing Order 75, the new clauses 75A, 75B and 75c, I cannot accept that and I wish to humbly express my views.

Following the motion moved by the chairman of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization, the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) proposed the following amendment:

That the third report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization be referred back to the committee, with instructions to amend it by deleting therefrom proposed Standing Order 75c.

On the other hand, the government says that it needs rule 75c in order to get the legislation it introduces in parliament, adopted without delay, but that it will very seldom use it. I heartily wish it will be so.

Standing order 33 is still effective and at one time, I had thought it would have been adequate without having to resort to rule 75c.

The government seems determined to get rule 75c through so that it will be an integral part of the standing orders to use against what it calls the "small opposition parties".

Mr. Speaker, we have first been elected as members of parliament and I remember that during the first sittings of the house, several members who have been in the house for twenty years and yourself have stated on several occasions that all the members in this house have equal rights and similar privileges, no matter whether we are seated on a back or a front bench. I cannot understand therefore why a certain number of hon. members should be muzzled, only because according to the government the debates are unduly delayed.

Mr. Speaker, where are the government bills whose passage was delayed, on account of the bad faith of the opposition? I wonder. Some have suggested that such was the case at the report stage of Bill C-150, better known as the omnibus bill. Of course, consideration of this bill took more time than some

small bill, and this is understandable. There were in fact several amendments to the Criminal Code in a single bill, and it was the duty of hon. members to make a thorough study of it and to suggest amendments in line with the representations made by recognized organizations and public opinion. I think it was only normal that the opposition members repeat in this house all the representations of those who were against some parts of the omnibus bill. In my opinion that is the role of any hon. member in a democratic parliament.

The opposition should not be held responsible if the work of the house is not progressing according to the wishes of the government. The responsibility lies mainly with the standing committees, which do not always operate very quickly. As long as a bill is before a committee and has not returned to the house, how can the house finally pass it?

For instance, the language bill was given first reading on October 17, 1968, but was only passed by parliament late in June. Is such a slow pace due to the opposition parties?

In my opinion, committee work could be speeded up in order that the bills referred to committees be studied without delay, and the reports brought back before the house earlier. This would surely make for a better allotment of time as far as parliament is concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I think that all members readily realized that with the number of hours spent considering various pieces of legislation, we could, I believe, with a little goodwill, expedite our business and report to the house a little more quickly, and this, in short, would enable every member who does not sit on committees to examine bills more thoroughly and to make a few suggestions if they see fit.

Mr. Speaker, how can it be explained that on the one hand, government members are boasting that a great many legislative measures have been passed during this session while on the other, it is intended to muzzle the opposition under the pretext that it delays the adoption of bills?

Mr. Speaker, we are here as members of parliament, not to destroy but to work at the development of Canada in every field, according to what we consider best for the people. I am aware that we have made an earnest contribution to the business of the house and that there is no reason for the government to complain to the extent of wanting to suppress freedom of speech in the house.

[Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse).]