

*Procedure and Organization*

**Mr. Jerome:** The nub of the situation is this. Having started on the road of allocation of time for debate, the opposition feels that the ultimate control of how time shall be allocated ought to rest with it. Our simple position is that we think that control ought to rest with the government. If we have arrived at an impasse because of our positions, by all means let us conclude our discussion, cast our ballots and suffer the political consequences or rewards that may flow from our decisions, as the case may be.

When members of the opposition speak about resolving these matters by consent they surely cannot deny that the withholding of such consent amounts to a veto. If one looks at the proceedings of the United Nations Security Council, one will see that that body proceeds on the basis of consent. Where that consent is withheld, that is tantamount to a veto. We hear little about consent operating in the United Nations and we hear much more about the veto. The nub of this issue, therefore, is not obstruction.

Where is the ultimate control here going to rest, Mr. Speaker? Is it to rest with the opposition, which is what it wants and all it will tolerate, or is it going to rest with the government, which has been given a majority by the people of this nation and which, I submit, should be entitled to submit its program, have it considered and rest on its majority strength, and if that is not the right thing for it to do it can face the voters at the next election. That is the way the country is supposed to be run.

**Mr. Barnett:** Will the hon. member permit a question? Does he not recall that when the hon. member for Nanaïmo-Cowichan-The Islands (Mr. Douglas) was discussing the one per cent he was talking about cases with respect to closure? Has the hon. member forgotten the existence of Standing Order 33?

**Mr. Jerome:** I have not forgotten Standing Order 33, but I say it is time we got into something that is a little more sensible—programming our time for debate in advance. This is something entirely different. I cannot help feeling that the opposition is inclined to accept the idea of having programming in advance but is not inclined to let go of old traditions because it feels that difficulties may arise. I cannot help comparing the position of the opposition—and I cannot claim originality for this thought—with that of the Australian who was very pleased with his new boomerang but who could not bring himself to throw his old boomerang away.

[Mr. Jerome.]

I think the second manifestation of the opposition's inability to see the whole picture here stems from its failure to grasp the fact that this particular rule change is part of a composite series of rule changes which will enable the government, as part of its program, to change its way of doing business in this house. Let us make no mistake about this. There are hon. members opposite who said, when the Ralliement Creditiste day after day kept talking about the question of conscience and how that was related to the proposed changes in the Criminal Code, that in debates of that kind this new concept ought to be invoked. I say that we ought to divide here and now, because the kind of parliament I want to see is the kind of parliament to which Canadians can come and instead of saying, "My God, is this the way you have been doing things for 100 years", say, "I am glad to see how efficiently and diligently parliamentary work is being done." That is the kind of parliament I want and I would not hesitate in going to my constituents and saying that is the kind of parliament I want.

We are promoting these rule changes because, as other rule changes have been salutary, so we think these will be. Opposition members welcomed the changes in the standing committee structure which enabled all members of the house in a very real way to take part in the work of the standing committees. Every single member of the house now enjoys the opportunity of participating in a much more meaningful way in the machinations of government.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** That is a good word.

**Mr. Jerome:** The individual member can now question the minister when estimates are being discussed or when legislation is before a committee. He now has the opportunity to examine and cross-examine a wide range of witnesses who may deal with any relevant subject matter before the committee. I think every hon. member will agree that those rule changes enable him to participate in a much better way in the affairs of this house.

● (4:50 p.m.)

Another aspect which appears to have been forgotten by hon. members opposite is that the funds which were allocated to opposition members for research assistance have given them a better opportunity to anticipate in a very meaningful way the deliberations of this house and its committees. The manifestation