

*Procedure and Organization*

teacher, Douglas Fisher, for having moved closure.

Mr. Speaker, it is public opinion which threw out the right hon. C. D. Howe. It is also public opinion which rejected the Liberal government in 1957, and elected a Progressive Conservative government.

Mr. Speaker, it is not the responsibility of a political party or a government to impose rules such as standing order 75c which they want to ram down the throat of the Canadian people.

Mr. Speaker, drivelers are not all in the opposition. There are some on the government side.

As far as extending the debate on the omnibus bill, the Canadian people will judge us in that respect. We fought in earnest. We fought with conviction and I cannot see why a government would now want to practically render the opposition powerless to carry on the struggle.

If we do not have the right to take the necessary time to arouse public opinion about a bill, what is the use of parliament? Why not resort to standing orders 75c and 75d in order to abolish all opposition parties?

The Prime Minister boasts about the fact that he gave us 28 days to blame the government but what bills can the opposition introduce in the house? We can criticize the government for a day or for 28 days but that does not change the legislation. The government alone has the right to prepare and introduce legislation. Now it practically takes away from us the right to discuss that legislation when the time comes to do so.

The government talks about improving parliamentary procedure. But the closure rule is nothing new. I heard the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) say the other day "We will almost never use section 75c." Then, why include it in the standing orders of the house?

Opposition parties were willing to accept sections 75A and 75B, but not 75c which constitutes a permanent closure rule. Tonight we are witnessing, I repeat we are witnessing the last hours of parliamentary democracy. With standing order 33, they want to impose on us a permanent closure rule, known as section 75c.

Mr. Speaker, if that is democracy as the Prime Minister understands it, it is a democracy that strangely resembles what I saw in Moscow a few years ago and what is to be

[Mr. Caouette.]

seen now in Communist China, under Mao Tse-tung.

Mr. Speaker, when debates are hindered, when the opposition is prevented from expressing its views, as I said a while ago, what is the use of an opposition? The Prime Minister said that a minority cannot impose its views on a majority. Therefore, must we always submit to the majority, refrain from discussing government measures, be content with receiving the allowances the Prime Minister says he has granted the opposition for research work, and then have no longer the right to debate anything? We are being gagged with section 75c.

Mr. Speaker, the opposition parties are not the only ones protesting against Standing Order 75c. I was reading today various Canadian newspapers—not Conservative, Progressive or N.D.P. papers—but papers of a certain intellectual standing that are against Standing Order 75c.

I have before me an editorial from the *Montreal Gazette* of July 24—it is not so long ago—and the writer warns the government against the passage of Standing Order 75c.

Finally, let us reverse the roles somewhat. If the Prime Minister were sitting in the place of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), what would he honestly say about Standing Order 75c? He would fight against the government that would want to muzzle him.

Well, we have the right to fight the government who wants to muzzle us. We do not accept closure and the government will not impose it upon us tonight, at one o'clock. I quote this editorial:

● (9:00 p.m.)

[*English*]

If that parliamentary majority approves of what the government proposes, then democracy is in action and must not be hindered. This doctrine, however, omits something which is essential. The government is very unlikely to receive critical review from its own supporters—

[*Translation*]

We have only to look in front of us to see that members do not rise often to criticize the government. They cheer at random, they howl because they are held up and caught, because they are put on the spot, because they have to do it, because they are afraid and it is with such spineless followers that an