

Extension of Sittings

Mr. McDermid: Wrong.

Mr. Barrett: Were the people of Sydney, Nova Scotia visited by—in tatters and rags, I am sure because it is a long trip for these venerable gentlemen—a parliamentary committee in order that ordinary citizens could have their say? Not at all. There was no travelling committee. There was not even a subcommittee of this Chamber. It was put in this House and again closure was used. Closure was used by a political Party that, under a former Leader, promised that it would never do so.

The Government has decided that it is ruling by divine right rather than by a consensus of citizens. There are going to be disruptions from the agreement, and everybody on the government side acknowledges that. However, does the Government intend to head off the deep resentment of people who will be affected by this Bill by at least letting them have a say? Not at all. Government Members say: "Suspend the rules, we are going to ram it through, and we will have anything we want any time we want it".

I suppose that is permissible. I suppose one can do whatever one wants with the rules. Earlier I heard someone talk about moral responsibility. There is no such thing as moral responsibility with a Government that has this majority. It has decided that it will change the rules to suit its own purposes.

I suppose in another Chamber or with another attitude some Members will go to high schools or to universities and tell students to behave themselves, obey the rules of life, and they too will be a success and can join the Conservative Party and then break the rules when they get there.

These sanctimonious Tories who, in deep, serious tones, talk about their mandate to put forward this legislation without a commitment for allowing full debate, suggests the word hypocrisy. I do not know if the word "hypocrisy" is allowed in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Dick: It is not.

Mr. Barrett: It is not allowed in this Chamber.

Mr. Marchi: Generically, it is.

Mr. Barrett: Generically, it is allowed. Well, generically it applies to the Conservative Party. I see it as a

cynical move by a Government that does not have a commitment to the total parliamentary process. Only that type of Government would bring forward the amendment we are debating today.

• (1650)

There will be anger over the legislation, Mr. Speaker, as it goes through, and the anger over its results will continue to build in this country. One of the higher points of that anger will relate to the fact that committee consideration of the legislation was done in Committee of the Whole as opposed to a legislative committee of the House.

The whole process, Mr. Speaker, is not a good lesson for new Members of this Chamber, who actually believed that they would be heard as individuals—and that is true even of government back-benchers.

The fact that the Government placed its back-bench Members in the front benches on this side of the House, where opposition Members traditionally have been, is symbolic of how this Government feels about the Parliament of Canada. The front benches on this side of the House should be allocated to the Liberal and New Democratic Parties, with the Government back-benchers then being allocated seating. But that was not to be the case. This Government returned to this House, flush with victory, and declared, through the selection of seating alone, that it did not give a fig about the Opposition; that it was going to have its way, no matter what. And that is exactly what is taking place.

Some Hon. Members: You should consider yourself fortunate to have a seat at all.

An Hon. Member: We did not know it bothered you so much, Dave.

Mr. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, I am thankful that I have captured the attention of Hon. Members opposite. I am thankful that I have Hon. Members opposite listening to me and that they are acting so friendly toward me. In fact, I now want to ask the Government—

An Hon. Member: Hey, windbag, when are you going to learn the rules of this place?

Mr. Barrett:—what its purpose is.

Some Hon. Members: Sit down!