

Government Orders

your head and you are in agreement as well and I am sure you would want to participate and I welcome your participation because as a distinguished member of this House you, too, realize as I am sure many members do how Draconian and how terrible this package of rules is for Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, I accordingly move, seconded by the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands:

That the motion be amended in the first paragraph by deleting proposed amendments numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 12, 16, 17, 21, 25, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, and 45 and by deleting section 73(5) in proposed amendment numbered 24.

Mr. Speaker, I was intending to sit down but since the hon. member opposite has wanted me to speak for another period of time I want to accommodate him because it is not often that I get a chance to speak in this Chamber, particularly on a subject which is so vital to our deliberations here.

I know the hon. member opposite who made that statement is a long-standing member of the House of Commons and he, too, will probably want to participate in the debate over the next number of weeks as we approach June, and that he would want me to put other items on the record.

I want to assure him that there are many members of my party who will now want to speak, particularly after the interventions which have been made by the government House leader. I know my colleague from Kingston and the Islands and the member for Ottawa Vanier will want to participate at length and they will have other things to say. I do not want to disappoint the hon. member, but I want to tell him that they will have, shall we say, an enlightened view on some of the proposed rule changes, perhaps very similar to the views that I have expressed here today. I hope that he would be in the Chamber and afford them the same kind of opportunities and courtesies by listening to their interventions which we believe, and which we know, will add a great deal to this particular debate on a very important subject matter.

Finally, I want to say thank you to my colleague from Kingston and the Islands and to members of my staff who reviewed this legislation. But I want to thank the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader

and the chief government Whip for their deliberations on this particular subject matter. I know in my heart of hearts that way deep down, both those hon. members know very well that these rule changes are wrong, and probably on Wednesday when they go to caucus they will stand in their place and echo the sentiments that we are echoing on this side of the House: No, no, no to these rule changes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): I find the amendment moved by the hon. member to be in order.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I must say we enjoyed listening to that exhaustive examination of the proposed changes to the rules of the House. Now, of course, we are debating government motion No. 30, rules of the House of Commons and changes to the Standing Orders.

It sounds very straightforward and perhaps rather inconsequential in many respects to those listening to the debates and watching the discussions. Thirty pages in our books, 64 different clauses. Let's face it, there is quite a range of issues here, some very trivial issues that simply needed to be brought up to date in terms of the modernization of dealing with the legislative material.

Others have touches of totalitarianism associated with them, major changes in terms of how the House of Commons operates.

Perhaps it is not by mistake. You will notice how it is dark over the House of Commons today. When you look out the windows there is a dark cloud hanging over the House of Commons. It is symbolic, I might add, in terms of the dark cloud that hangs over the Parliament of Canada and the dark cloud, indeed, that is hanging over parliamentary democracy as we know it in this country.

I must say that what we are debating today is perhaps one of the most important issues that we will debate in this House for the next number of weeks and months. Today, when the Prime Minister introduced the President of Mexico, he referred to the House of Commons as the "crucible of parliamentary democracy". When the President of Mexico spoke, he referred to this House as "the House of democracy in which is determined the will of the people of Canada".