

Government Orders

That is not by itself dictatorship but it is part of a pattern of dictatorship. I remember nine years ago when the same Tory party was in the opposition and it objected wildly to the then Liberal government doing something like that. The Liberal government brought in a motion to control or regulate the oil companies. The Tory party objected wildly on behalf of its friends in the oil companies and it shut down this House for two weeks. It hijacked this House by abusing a rule that was then customary. It was not written in the books. It was a customary rule. The Speaker, a member of the government party, had to uphold the rule until the opposition party blackmailed the whole House into agreeing to change the rule.

The rule was simply this: Because the opposition had demanded a recorded vote according to its rights, it refused to come in. It refused to re-enter the House to let the vote take place.

Nothing was done for two weeks in Parliament. This is the same Tory party that is now complaining that we debate things. "We waste time," it says "debating." It wasted two weeks doing nothing in order to blackmail the government party and the Speaker of that day into agreeing to change certain rules, including the rule that it had used to get those changes.

The rules were changed by agreement then and once since then. In the last three years this government has not wanted to waste time getting agreement to change the rules. It just lays it down and says: "This is how it is going to be. Like it or lump it." That is what it did yesterday, and the Speaker liked it.

We can lump it. That is the government's attitude. No more attempt to have rational discussion. Just: "We are the boss. Do what we tell you."

Debate is slowly being cut down to next to nothing. It means that the people who elected opposition members to speak for them in Parliament are being cut out of their voice. Bills will be passed so quickly that the public will not have any idea of what is happening because the newspapers do not publish the full detail of the bills.

A few people may find out but the general working public will not know what is being done to it by the government in Parliament with the opposition being more and more, month by month, gagged by this kind of rule change, one-sidedly.

Previous speakers have made that point, as I say, very powerfully and eloquently. I want simply to agree with them in that outline and then take the matter a little bit deeper.

Why is the government doing this? This government is clearly the ally or the tool of the Business Council on National Issues. This is a group formed in the mid-1970s. It is composed of 150 of the chief executive officers of the biggest corporations in Canada. They are worth, perhaps, \$1 trillion, one thousand thousand million dollars. That is a lot of money in Canada.

Some of them are American-owned companies. They are calling the tune for this government. They asked for a free trade agreement, and they got it. They asked for cuts in the social programs, and they got it. Their third demand was for an increase in the military. We will see whether they get that.

In order to do what the Business Council on National Issues, made up of the richest corporations and the richest men in this country, is demanding, this government is using these more and more dictatorial measures.

It has rammed through the goods and services tax, which takes off the tax from the owners of property. Not one penny of the cost of the property of the manufacturing company is in the form of tax. Only the work of the workers turning steel into washing machines, leather into shoes or cloth into clothing is taxed in the goods and services tax.

The workers must pay more as workers and as consumers while the owners pay less. That has been the progress of this government for the last seven years and it was the progress of the government before it, but it did not move as quickly.

This government is dismantling Canada Post. It wants to privatize it so that it will enrich some of its friends who will be able to buy it up for a song. It is chopping down the unemployment insurance system which has established and stabilized the life of this country for 45 years.

It has completely withdrawn any government responsibility for the funding of it and it has stolen hundreds of millions of dollars out of it for training purposes which have nothing to do with the original mandate of unemployment insurance. There may be people out there in the public who will say "who cares?" The people on bread lines care. The working people who know that wages have gone down in the last 10 years care. The people in Toronto and metro Toronto who cannot buy a