

Procedure and Organization

helped to formulate 75A and 75B. I think both those provisions would help bring about a more orderly handling of the business of the house and would provide for an allocation of time on the basis of agreement and consensus. But the President of the Privy Council was not satisfied with that. Noting the approach of the end of the session he rammed 75c through that committee supported only by the government members on the committee. Then he sought to ram it through the house, not in the way it is being done now by discussion of the committee's report, but by introducing a motion.

Yesterday the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Blair) sought to excuse his quiescent inactivity by saying he was waiting until the business of the house had been disposed of before he got up. Well, of course, if it was the intention of the government that the report of this committee would be discussed, why is item 99 on the order paper? Why did the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) find it necessary to file his motion? He did so for the obvious reason that he wanted to make two minor changes in the report of the committee. He knew that if those changes were to be made they could be made only by referring the report back to the committee. Therefore he sought to block the report of the committee and to produce his interpretation and altered version of the committee report.

The government has been caught in its own tangled web of duplicity and subterfuge. Its machinations have backfired and it stands exposed for its blatant attempts to muzzle parliament and denigrate the rights of opposition members.

Mr. Stanfield: An arrogant, miserable bunch.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): I must say, Mr. Speaker, that the government members across the way have now dwindled to three. I see two of them in the rump, which makes five. There are no cabinet members present. They certainly are interested in this subject. I suppose if all the opposition members left we would not have a quorum. I think this is an indication of this government's attitude toward parliament and a—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Crouse: No respect for parliament at all.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): —complete contempt for a demo-

[Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands).]

cratic deliberative assembly. The question which has been asked and which must be answered in this debate is, why has rule 75c been introduced? It was rammed through in committee and now it has been brought in after all the business of the house has been disposed of and normally members would not be here to deal with this rule 75c. The government has given us no valid reason for introducing a streamlined form of the guillotine. The President of the Privy Council, if this rule is passed, will go down in Canadian parliamentary history as "Mac the Gag", because that is the sole purpose of rule 75c. The government cannot claim it is introducing this rule because it has faced obstruction in this session of parliament.

An hon. Member: Why not?

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): There has been no obstruction. The opposition have co-operated fully with the government.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): May I point out first of all that the opposition voluntarily gave up four allotted days during which it would have been the privilege of members of the opposition to criticize the government and raise matters which they thought were of interest to their constituents and the country.

An hon. Member: So that we could adjourn on June 27.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): We gave up those four days in order that government business could be discussed. I wish to point out what may not be generally known. Through the house leaders of the various parties on this side we offered to sit extra hours during the latter part of the month of June so that we could finish up the business of the house by June 27, provided the government would not proceed with rule 75c. The government turned that down. The government's legislative program could have been finished on June 27 as planned. There was no question of obstruction.

When the members of the government complain about the length of debates I should like to say that in no parliament with which I have had any association has there been any government which has had more co-operation than this government has had. When I compare this parliament with the antics of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse—Pearson,