

*Procedure and Organization*

the Privy Council to stop being as arrogant as they have been up to now and to understand at last that what we are asking for is quite reasonable.

We will not suffer being reduced to silence by the wishes of a couple of ministers. We do not want the public to be deprived of their voice in the House of Commons through their representatives, which, Mr. Speaker, does not apply to opposition members alone. As a matter of fact, while silencing opposition members, the measure will have the same effect on hon. members opposite. I do not understand the fact that the backbenchers on the other side of the house do not have anything to say on occasion to safeguard their constituents' interests.

I appeal to my friends opposite, the backbenchers. I plead with them to do everything they can to make the frontbenchers of their party understand that the national interest is at stake, that the best interests of democracy are at stake, so that we may, in the house, at any time, express the aspirations of our constituents.

Mr. Ryan also said, and I quote:

The government, therefore, did not have, during this session, any serious reasons to complain against obstructionists tactics from the opposition parties.

As a matter of fact, there was only one such case, and that was the omnibus bill, of which the members of the Ralliement créditiste unduly delayed passage. But that case does not, by itself, justify introducing a rule such as 75c.

The government could have taken advantage of the favourable conditions prevailing to increase co-operation between the free men who make up Parliament. Instead, it chose to propose a rule which would have the effect of changing parliament into a college. Unacceptable in principle, such an attitude betrays, in practice, a deplorable disregard for the human factor, without which the most promising technical schemes are doomed to failure.

Hon. members across the floor would be well-advised to give to those comments all the consideration required, having regard to the gravity of the situation.

Since we are short of time, let me only mention the title of some other articles that have been published concerning the proposed motion of the President of the Privy Council.

In the *Montréal-Matin* of Thursday, July 10, Mr. Clément Brown, in an article entitled "Unfortunate Stubbornness" said that the Trudeau government will not increase its prestige by forcing adoption of said 75c.

And in the *Ottawa Citizen* of July 4, one could read an article under this heading:

[English]

"Rights imperilled. Closure rule is too drastic".

[Translation]

In *The Gazette*, on July 14, there was this heading:

[English]

"Compromise needed in rules debate".

[Translation]

And in that article one could read the following paragraph:

[English]

The government would be unwise to insist on its proposed rule 75c. If this rule is adopted, it would give any government with a majority the power to limit debate at any time. This is a drastic power. And it is needless.

[Translation]

Further, one could read and I quote:

[English]

If the government is really seeking the power to limit debates, surely rule 75b would be sufficient. Why proceed to the still more drastic provisions of rule 75c?

• (3:20 p.m.)

[Translation]

I repeat, Mr. Speaker, that we are only asking for something reasonable. We are asking for the possibility to make ourselves heard as often as circumstances compel us to do so, as representatives of the people, in order to express their views.

I do hope that members opposite will take in hand the destiny of this parliament and will not do anything to reduce the importance of the debates in this house. If hon. members are to be deprived of their right to speak, under Standing Order 75c, this will be a very sad day indeed. Such a day will come when the government because it has the majority, reduces to silence the representatives of the people.

I hope that hon. members—the new-comers especially—on the other side of the house will join us and oppose the voice of reason to the arrogance of those who sit in the front benches of the Liberal party.

[English]

**Mr. Lloyd Francis (Ottawa West):** Mr. Speaker, about two days ago one speaker on the other side of the house who is here now, the hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings (Mr. Hees), indicated that one of the reforms that might be very effective in this house would be a reduction in the time used to make speeches. Certainly I, along with other members of the house, was very interested in this aspect of his remarks. This speech was