

*Procedure and Organization*

We know that in the course of two world wars, Canadians were called upon to sacrifice their lives and to contribute financially in the name of freedom. Many of our relatives laid down their lives during both of these wars. Had they lived, they would certainly feel unhappy to see that freedom is now jeopardized instead of being encouraged.

Mr. Speaker, if the session is protracted, it is certainly not because we used the time of the house to discuss the farming problems in eastern Canada. It is not either because we took too much time discussing the problems of the dairy industry and the government's dairy policy for 1969-70, since that item was not even put on the orders of the day by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson), and yet, the situation is extremely serious. On the other hand, many problems have not been debated, although they would have interested the people of Canada. Those are certainly not the topics on which we dwell most.

If my memory serves me well, Mr. Speaker, it was on May 24, 1967, that the farmers of the provinces of Quebec and Ontario organized a march on parliament hill. On that occasion, the farmers, respectful of law and order, came to express their grievances and ask for a little justice.

I recall that in front of the parliament buildings, TV cameras were focused on the crowd of marchers in order to broadcast the event all across Canada. The same evening, both the press and TV were reporting that the marchers had behaved extremely well because of their respect for order, and because their claims were justified and were expressed in a spirit not of destruction, but of co-operation.

● (9:10 p.m.)

Even if a few windows gave way under the pressure of the crowd and were shattered, it was not intentional. Indeed, I was there and I remember that at the door of the parliament buildings the few windows which gave way were not broken out of malice by the marchers, but gave way under the pressure of the crowd who wanted to meet the ministers and talk to them. We did not want to deprive them of their right to speak, but we wanted to give them the right to speak to us.

Mr. Speaker, the government has no call to complain about the opposition, because during this session, the days allotted to the opposition under a standing order of the house

were not all used up to criticize the government, as is the opposition's right, in order to give the government more time to have the legislation it wanted to introduce in the house passed. That is co-operation, Mr. Speaker.

In my opinion, it would be advisable to try to improve the standing orders and I am sure it is in that spirit that all members wish to work, so as to adjust the standing orders to our present needs. Those rules which need to be amended, should be geared to our century of speed, but without giving up everything, especially our freedom of speech which would be taken away by a mere decision of a minister, under overly drastic standing orders.

I feel that we have made good progress by adding to rule order 75, rules 75A and 75B. Even if at the beginning, there seemed to be some disagreement about those new provisions, I think that after a thorough consideration of the merits of standing orders 75A and 75B, on the whole, all members accept them. In my opinion, we should have given rules 75A and 75B a fair trial in the next session, and if serious problems had cropped up during the trial period, the government could have applied standing order 33.

Because of the little experience I have acquired in thirty years of participation in various organizations, I can safely say that an agreement is always possible among people of good will.

Mr. Jean-Charles Bonenfant, librarian of the Quebec legislature said this:

Any reform of parliamentary work should aim at making it more efficient and at ensuring the freedom of participants. Nothing else must remain. What is useless, or cannot really contribute to expedite our proceedings must go.

If we gave a look at that, we could find out there are traditions and practices that it would be well for us to abandon. We would thus save time, which would be to the benefit of the House of Commons.

We must all be serious-minded enough, I think, to be able to understand each other and give our country the example of a parliament working to promote the best interests of all, while always taking into account the fact that it is the public that pays the opposition, the government and the government members. I am not more eager than anybody else to spend twelve months in session, while we could do the same work, and very well, in eight months. My constituency is a very large one and during the adjournment period, it would be very useful for me, as for all other