

the year 1960. That is misleading the House and is unacceptable. I cannot understand how Members who were here at the time can so lightly support an affirmation such as this which has been made more than once during the last three years. It is absolutely contrary to the reality, the truth and to what happened in fact.

During the speech of the Leader of the Opposition I asked that I be provided with the proper extracts from the records of the House of Commons. I see the Hon. Member for St. John's East has come back and I hope he will convey the message to his dear leader, the Hon. Member for Yukon.

**Mr. Smith:** Beloved leader.

**Mr. Pinard:** His beloved leader, I am sorry. The reference is clear and it appears on page 4230 of *Hansard* for December 20, 1968, when the fourth and fifth reports of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization of the House were presented and adopted by all Parties unanimously. The questions were put and agreed to. As shown in the *Journals* of the House of Commons at page 554, December 20, 1968, we see the corroboration of the fact that the new Standing Orders, including 25 Opposition days and the whole Business of Supply we are now applying, were not carried on division, not forced through by closure. The questions were put to the House and they were agreed to unanimously.

So I hope that once and for all the Leader of the Opposition will stop saying the Business of Supply has been imposed on the Opposition. It was a decision taken by Parliamentarians, just like the decision we took a few months ago to experiment in parliamentary reform. That was supported unanimously by Members on both sides of the House. I hope that in future the Hon. Member for Yukon, who has been here for over a quarter of a century, would stop misleading the House on this in order to try and score cheap political points when the facts are absolutely contrary to what he is saying.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, when I started my speech, I said that I would also like to put certain facts on the record. For a better understanding of what I am about to say, the public must realize that in a week in Parliament—before the present experiment, that is, last year and in previous years—only four days were available to the Government to consider subjects, bills and measures introduced by the Government. On average, the Opposition was usually given one day on which it would select the subject for debate. If we consider the time that has been spent on a number of important measures in the national interest during this session, we realize how limited the Government is in its flexibility and its ability to introduce for debate enough measures in the national interest to meet the needs of a society as diversified as ours.

Perhaps I may refer Hon. Members to the major debates we have had during this session, of which we are particularly proud. The Leader of the Opposition alluded to the fact that this has been the longest session in history, having gone on for

more than three years. We are nevertheless proud of that fact, because this session has produced many exceptionally important measures that have made history and that are vital to the entire country. I am referring to what we have done in very basic and specific areas such as the Constitution, energy and the economy. As soon as we started this session, we made it quite clear that we intended to be aggressive, to table major issues and introduce appropriate measures, even if they might be controversial, because we felt it was necessary for the country, that it was our responsibility as a Government, and also because we knew these measures would come before Parliament, which would have an opportunity to debate them, we hoped, in a constructive and civilized manner. Unfortunately, that has not always been the case, and I shall talk about this later on. In any case, most people are aware of what happened on certain occasions.

Take the Constitution, for instance. In his motion, the Leader of the Opposition blames the Government, and I quote:

—for its continuing attempts to reduce Parliament and Parliamentary government to an irrelevant appendix in the formulation and application of major national policy decisions—

I should think the term national policy applies particularly well to patriation of the Constitution, the Charter of Rights, the inclusion of the principles sharing, equity and equalization in the constitutional resolution, as well as a new amending formula that was adopted.

However, in order to consider this national question, we had to use . . . I am not complaining, but it is a fact we should not overlook and which explains why so often other measures had to wait their turn, and why some sessions, during which a great deal of business is considered, will tend to last longer. The debate on the Constitution, not counting the meetings of the Committee, took up 38 days of debate in the House on the various motions we introduced, both before and after the debate in committee. If we add the months of televised debate on this important subject in committee, we will realize that Parliament, which consists not only of the House of Commons and the Senate but also of their respective committees, was asked to debate a very important issue, that Parliament was therefore involved in these decisions and that in the final instance, the constitutional resolution we brought before Parliament is a resolution that was debated in the House of Commons, before the Special Joint Committee of the House of Commons and the Senate, and, finally, in the Senate. The Constitution we have now is a constitution made in Canada, but considering the issue we are debating this morning, it is entirely proper to say that it is a constitution that was made in Parliament.

To think there are people who claim that we have downgraded Parliament. I wonder how they could forget the time the House spent not so long ago on issues that are of vital importance to the entire country. Thirty-eight days is quite a long time, when we realize that the Government has four days a week, which means that in one month, there are 16 days