

*Government Orders*

There are six bills. One of them is already passed so we are left with five. Take for example the federal environmental assessment process. The government can take it because it is not worth very much. It is through the House of Commons, with all of its rules, with its checks and balances, that the government is accountable to the people of Canada. Every member of Parliament sits down and speaks to the second reading, the principle of the bill, and is given certain assurances by the government. The bill then goes into committee. All of a sudden, the members discover the government is not prepared to do really what it said it was going to do.

Just suppose the members of the House of Commons then say: "We are now going to stall this bill". That is a legitimate rule of procedure. There are not very many rules left on which a private member or the backbenchers in this House can exert any pressure. The accountability of the Government of Canada to the people of Canada has eroded over the years because of these rule changes.

• (1640)

A minister no longer needs to know what is going on in his department because of this erosion. A member's power in the House of Commons has so decreased over the years that the House of Commons has merely become an institution of lists.

Here we have the members of the House dealing with bills and having the power to say: "We are not going to pass this. The government has fooled us. To the Environmental Act it is not prepared to accept amendments. We are going to stall it until dissolution".

Along comes dissolution and along comes the government again next year and calls the bill as if it has passed all of these procedures and gone into committee. In other words, the government can do whatever it wants. It does not have to go back to the beginning again.

We have environmental bills. We have the Clean Water Act; we have the Clean Air Act; we have the Environmental Contaminants Act; we have the Fisheries Act. We have acts coming out of our ears to protect the environment and then we ask under this legislation: Is this going to now solve the problem of, say, polychlori-

nated biphenyls being used in transformers on telephone poles? "Oh, no" says the government.

Is this going to solve the problems we have in all of our wilderness areas of the use of aerial spraying of herbicides, for example, or insecticides such as fenitrothion, Matacil or any of these toxic substances sprayed over large areas? The groups concerned discover that this bill is really not going to solve that problem.

Those of us who were interested asked the question: "Will the bill be able to solve the problem of the total destruction of our fishing resource on the east coast of Canada by foreign nations, licensed by the Government of Canada? The answer was no. We are still giving out the licences to the Russians and to the fleets from Japan, Cuba, Denmark, Poland and Germany; some of the countries which operate massive factory freezer trawlers within Canadian waters, destroying our environment and the fishing resource. All because the Government of Canada has decreed that fisheries in this nation shall take its guidelines from the Department of External Affairs.

I discovered just the other day that France has not even paid its bill from 1987 for its licences. The federal cabinet met two years ago, I discovered, and passed an Order in Council forgiving the French \$450,000 of their licence fees and they promised to pay the remaining \$355,000. They have been doing so since on the instalment plan. They paid three times two years ago. This year the federal government got a cheque on March 27, and France still owes for its licence fees back in 1987.

The Soviet Union still has not paid the \$997,000 it owes for its fees for last year. Here is a Canadian fisherman who cannot get a licence unless he has his fees paid for. Here are men and women today who look out at the ocean and see nine foreign nations fishing 12 miles off their coast and they are not allowed to get a licence. Why? To protect the resource of Canada.

We look at this legislation and we do not want it to go through because it does not cover the polychlorinated biphenyls in the transformer, it does not cover the fenitrothion in the forests and it does not cover the fishing resource which is being destroyed by nine foreign