

Supply—Mr. McCleave

have some doubts about the suppertime debates, not so much perhaps from the standpoint of members themselves, though I think this can be awkward, but because I think it imposes an extra burden on the Chair, Mr. Speaker, as well as on the staff, the *Hansard* reporters and the young pageboys who surely should be given some kind of a break. I think this is something which could be examined after a period of time to see whether it really has lived up to the expectations of those who brought it about.

I have some suggestions, sir, for the future. I once told a leading Canadian statesman outside the House of Commons that it was quite likely that the house would be sitting ten months per year and that this would continue indefinitely from year to year. His response to me was: "How then can the government think about anything?" I suppose this might be a quick way of explaining certain failings of government. But I think we should also take a look at this more seriously and ask ourselves whether the procedure could not be changed so as to make it more easy for the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) and the ministers of his cabinet to have days away from the House of Commons, perhaps by having them sit here three days a week but allowing them to be free the other two days to go about their business, which after all is the country's business. In this regard I think we might take a look at the practice in the United Kingdom.

For over two and a half years, as an unwilling occupant of the outside, I was an interested spectator watching what went on here, and I do not think there was any more exciting figure over those two and a half years than the gentleman who now occupies the position of President of the Privy Council (Mr. Favreau). I am sure that anything that was done before has been exceeded by what took place the week end before last. Here he was on a Saturday night announcing and even applauding the death of his own baby, the Fulton-Favreau formula, and not only announcing and applauding that demise but I suspect he was guilty of the sin of infanticide when the actual deed came about.

May I comment for a moment on the circumstances surrounding the Victor Spencer case. I asked the Minister of Justice (Mr. Cardin) whether he had reviewed the action taken in the light of the Canadian Bill of Rights and the hon. gentleman assured me that he had. I had in mind, however, the section of the act which says that no law

shall be applied so as to provide cruel and unusual treatment of any Canadian. Yet here is Spencer, a man certainly not convicted of anything, a man who has not been found innocent of anything either for that matter, a man living in the twilight zone between guilt and innocence and condemned to walk in that twilight zone, so far as I can see, the rest of his days with police escorts of some kind watching his every move.

Surely, Mr. Speaker, this is something that is new, something that is cruel and something that is unusual in the treatment of a person living in Canada. I hope that the Minister of Justice, whose conscience must suffer some serious doubts about the way in which this matter is being handled, will take a look at the question again, and I hope Mr. Spencer will either have his day in court or be allowed to disappear into oblivion.

The program which we deal with this session reminds me of rummaging through an attic and going through old love letters, picking out the pieces and phrases which had an effect upon the loved one on a previous occasion. This Throne Speech is a resurrection of past hopes. I think the weakness of the program that we are facing is its lack of value. We do not seem to have a system of priorities here. There are things we wish to get on with, new programs that can perhaps be exploited politically and profitably.

● (7:00 p.m.)

This failure to exercise good housekeeping is, I think, one of the serious indictments one can level against the present government. For example, the problem of inflation is facing many Canadians who are little able to deal with it. I have in mind superannuated civil servants, those living on veterans pensions and the elderly in general. And I ask, publicly: Why embark on new and costly things when our house is not in order and when the programs we have now are not really carrying out the purposes intended.

Then, again, in the housecleaning category, there is the question of bringing stability to the careers of servicemen. This, it seems to me, is a most serious problem.

I turn, now, to consideration of another organization, the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, which is a valuable addition to the community in which we live and which is doing excellent work to explore the resources of the Atlantic coast.

Geologists will tell you—indeed, they will tell anyone who is willing to listen to them