

Government Orders

him to the people of Canada, why does he not try to convince his colleagues in cabinet to do an honourable thing and we will have a little vote. If you do not want to call a general election just have a little vote in your constituency and winner takes all. Better still, have a vote in my constituency and the winner takes all as to whether or not they have confidence in the hon. member opposite or whether they have confidence in this hon. member who represents the constituency of Cape Breton—East Richmond.

I suggest that the minister opposite, who has a privileged status—and I underline that—earned but, nevertheless, status. Not only does he get \$64,000 a year, not only does he get \$20,000 in tax-free allowance, he is a cabinet minister and they make the big bucks. They get the chauffeurs to the car, they get all the deputies, they get all the assistants and they get all the big invitations.

I say to that hon. minister, run. Let us have an election and winner takes all. You will see that the sins of the past and your present attitudes toward various policies which exist at the present time and your attitude with trying to choke off the democratic ways, the House of Commons will not meet the test that Canadians expect of parliamentarians in the next election.

An hon. member: I win when I run.

Mr. Dingwall: The hon. member says he wins when he runs. Well, I have just given him an opportunity. If he is so believes and has conviction that they are running such a wonderful government and that these rule changes meet the test of the Canadian people, perhaps he should put something on the line. I say that somewhat in jest because I know hon. members opposite do not want to go to the polls. They are hoping by some miracle that the phoenix will arrive from the ashes and that Mulroney will do an about face and become popular among the Canadian people. Quite frankly, that will not take place.

In closing, I wish to say that the two—

An hon. member: Not yet.

Mr. Dingwall: If the hon. member wishes me to speak longer I will accommodate him and I will speak longer. If he is enjoying my intervention that much, I will try to accommodate for a while yet. I want to thank the hon. member for his vote of confidence.

I have another speech, but there are two points. I indicated to the government House leader and I indi-

cated to the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader that we, the Liberal Party of Canada, were opposed to these rule changes both privately and publicly. I indicated to them quite clearly that there ought to be a process. Let us move from the substance and let us go to the process. It is all well and good for individuals to have some discussions with regard to rule changes, but I have indicated clearly to him that we should have a standing committee, perhaps a special committee.

In fact, my colleague for Kingston and the Islands even made the intervention at one of our meetings with regard to having the whole matter referred to the Standing Committee on Elections and Privileges in order that we may examine, have witnesses come in, have Canadians see and be consulted. That was not to be. We have asked for a special committee of members of Parliament, not necessarily to travel the country or go to other jurisdictions, but perhaps to bring people here and discuss these in a reasonable manner if in fact rules have to be amended and changed. That was denied.

• (1750)

What was given by the government was a mere discussion of some of the rules by a working group which I believe the parliamentary secretary, my colleague from Kingston and the Islands, and a senior member of my staff had. But there have been no “substantive changes with regard to their proposals”. They have backed off a few things, but nothing overly substantive that could cause a reasonable person to conclude that this package is in the best interest of Parliament, of parliamentarians, or of the Canadian people.

They score very low in terms of process and in terms of substance. So the cliché that has been used in this House on many occasions, the Old Boys Club, is the route that they elected. That is the route that they follow, but they were told along the piece at all times that there was no deal. I know—this may sound unfair and I hope members will forgive me—that the government House leader was the minister responsible for Bill C-21, amendments to the Pharmaceutical Act.

I do not know if he has a cold or is on some form of drug, or whatever it is, but he has certainly forgotten some of the facts as I have enunciated them here today. Some have suggested that he has used bully-boy tactics. I leave that for others to discuss at another time. But let it be clear that we oppose these rules. We will debate them in the weeks ahead, Mr. Speaker, and I see you nodding