

that: It is taking away from the people of this country the right to have their wrongs or their grievances expressed in parliament.

To deal with the thing in itself, as it were, I support the views of the hon. member for Macleod (Mr. Coote) who asked why the right of reply to an unlimited extent be confined to only one member, the leader of a party in this House. Moreover even that arrangement might be abused by a little collusion between the government and some insignificant member.

Mr. FORKE: What does the hon. member mean by "insignificant member"?

Mr. NEILL: I should say "the member of any numerically insignificant group." Because there is no member in this House who is insignificant if he represents the wishes of his constituents. So far as a motion of no confidence in the government is concerned, the proposed new rule provides that unlimited speech shall be confined to the member making the motion and the minister replying thereto. Now, let us visualize for a moment. Say that one of the hon. members opposite, the member for Vancouver Centre (Mr. Stevens) gets up and makes a motion of want of confidence. It is imperative that somebody on the government side reply to him forthwith. But there are two hundred and forty-five members in the House, the life of the government is at stake—it may be going to go down—many members will want to speak; and surely it will not be suggested that the majority of the cabinet whose government is going down shall not have the right of reply for longer than forty minutes. Under this rule they would be precluded from making speeches beyond forty minutes. However, that does not worry me very much. If the opposition or the cabinet do not see the point of that there is no reason why I should worry. Now let me imagine there was a supposititious case in which a particular province was represented by only one man of a certain party in this House. Suppose the government of the day were putting through some deal extremely against the interests of that province. Suppose it was a gross gerrymander and we have heard of such cases, and it became the duty of that one miserable member to represent the interests of his province and to expose the situation. Why the hour glass would be turned upon him at the expiration of the forty minute period and he would be told to sit down.

Mr. SPENCER: What does my hon. friend mean by "miserable member"?

[Mr. Neill.]

Mr. NEILL: If I must make myself so plain I would say "miserable" in that condition. I do not suggest that my hon. friend is miserable or ever likely to be, but a member would be miserable who occupied such a position. Now I have heard it said that the government, the Speaker, the House would extend a member's privileges under such conditions. Not a bit of it. Somebody would get up and draw the Speaker's attention to the infraction of the rule and he would have to enforce it. So that the member who was the sole representative of his party in his province would have to bring his remarks to a close and he could only cover a few of the necessary points in the short space of forty minutes.

Mr. EDWARDS (Frontenac): Where is such a case possible?

Mr. NEILL: I would ask my hon. friend if he has such confidence in this government that he believes it would not be possible for them to carry out a gerrymander?

Mr. EDWARDS (Frontenac): I am asking where it is possible for only one man to be speaking for a province.

Mr. NEILL: Oh, I do not think that needs explanation. I have known of occasions where a whole province was represented by members of only one political stripe.

Mr. DUNNING: There is no Tory from Saskatchewan now. That is the situation you mean.

Mr. NEILL: Yes.

Mr. STEVENS: He is referring to the Yukon.

Mr. NEILL: At any rate I point out where you can go very far under such a rule. We have had an example of another sort quite recently. The hon. member for Vancouver Centre made a speech on the budget. Did any one of his opponents suggest on that occasion that he was obstructing, or unduly lengthening his remarks, or doing anything beyond making a fair statement on the important subject of the budget? The hon. member spoke for more than forty minutes, and yet under this rule when his time was up he would have been debarred from proceeding further and the House and the country would have lost the benefit of that speech.

Mr. LAPOINTE: His speech would have been just as effective.

Mr. NEILL: That is a matter of opinion. This speech had to do with the budget and I suggest that it cannot be dealt with in a forty minute speech. Allusion was made this