

*Procedure and Organization*

las), demonstrate best of all the theatrical skill that can be developed after many years' experience in this chamber. One could scarcely detect, in light of the pontifical attitude that he displayed in his remarks about good will and co-operation among the members of the house, that he came fresh from having to rap on the wrist one member of his party, the obstreperous member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters), who only a few moments ago on his own initiative and in that "spirit of good will and co-operation" that the last speaker was boasting about, frustrated what had apparently been an agreement reached by all parties in the house.

**Mr. Aiken:** No, it was not frustrated at all.

**Mr. Jerome:** I say to the leader of that party—

**Mr. Peters:** On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Timiskaming is rising on a question of privilege.

**Mr. Peters:** Mr. Speaker, at no time was I instructed by the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands (Mr. Douglas) to make any retraction; neither did he suggest in the first place that I should give my agreement. I believe, and I have always believed, that members of parliament should make up their own minds. When certain matters were brought to my attention I withdrew my objection, and if the hon. member had been in this chamber he would have known that this matter was taken care of in another manner.

**Mr. Jerome:** Mr. Speaker, I cannot imagine what it is that I am supposed to have witnessed since I have been here all afternoon.

**Mr. Fairweather:** The measure was passed, that is all.

**Mr. Jerome:** The hon. member who just raised a question of privilege stood in his place and frustrated an agreement that had been reached. He withdrew and entered later, the party having somehow managed to control him. This is why we are discussing this subject at this time.

Other experiences as a member of the standing committee have taught me that when members of the house speak of good will and co-operation among members it is proper to heed the advice of one of the senior members of the committee given to me at the

[Mr. Jerome.]

beginning of the deliberations, first, of the special committee on procedure and, latterly, of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization. The advice was that good will that is spoken of in that way rapidly vanishes when the prize of political advantage looms on the horizon.

If there is any doubt about that let me quickly move to a discussion of the attitude of all members of that committee to the proposal made by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) in regard to rule 75b. I was pleased and delighted to hear his answer to a question that was put yesterday by the hon. member for Ottawa West (Mr. Francis), who asked whether or not it was the opinion of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) that it was necessary to include in rule 75b a specific reference to the presence of the government house leader among the majority that the rule anticipates. I submit that his answer, to be found in yesterday's *Hansard*, gives a clear indication of the thought that was in the mind of every committee member when his proposal was discussed and then passed by the committee.

However, when the members of the opposition parties saw that there was a potential trap, that it looked as though, in the absence of that specific phrase, there might be an opportunity for three opposition members to try to gang up on the government house leader and to use the rule in this way, how quickly did they rise to the occasion! I might even quote the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin), who in his remarks welcomed back the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) on the ground, he said, that the right hon. gentleman was here to bail out the government house leader from the trap he had walked into. "Trap" was the word he used.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** It was the Prime Minister who used the word first.

**Mr. Jerome:** I hasten to say that I do not give hon. members opposite credit for setting that trap. I do not think they even saw any difficulty until it was pointed out to them. But as soon as it was pointed out to them they descended upon it and are now cherishing the point to the death. That shows how fast good will and co-operation in this house, at least in the eyes of a fledgling member, can dissolve in the face of political advantage. This is precisely what was taking place—

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Would the hon. member permit a question?