

has been of interest in the sort of entertainment it has afforded and profitable in what it has revealed of the methods adopted by hon. gentlemen opposite in dealing with the public generally. The public will not be deceived by the performance we had in this house over the whole of last week and during the early part of this week on the part of hon. gentlemen opposite.

But there is something more serious than that. In the course of this debate we have had a good deal said that I believe is very unfortunate from the point of view of the future development of parliamentary practice and procedure and of the solution of great questions in this parliament. Among other things, we have witnessed an effort made to change the nature of what has hitherto been regarded as the duty of a parliamentary committee, to change a committee appointed for the purpose of investigating matters, into a committee to devise policy, into a committee which would take unto itself the obligation which, under the British system of government, has always rested on the shoulders of the government of the day. If we continue with that kind of thing we shall soon find the whole basis of our system of responsible government being undermined, with consequences which no one, at this moment, can foresee.

Then there was a suggestion that members of the house would not serve on the committee, that, not being able to have their own way, not being able to get others to see things just in the same light as they saw them, they would not serve, they would refrain from discharging a duty which is part of the obligation of every hon. member of parliament. I do not want to stress the point, but I was very much impressed when I heard the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ilsley) describe his experience in New York while attending the assembly of the united nations. He told us that walking out and refusing to serve was the method being adopted by some of the Soviet representatives at the united nations. I hope we are not going to have government in Canada carried on or developed along those lines, and I hope we have heard the last of any suggestion from hon. members that they intend to proceed in accordance with these new revolutionary methods, if they may be so termed.

Another thing which has been unfortunate is a tendency which has been clearly revealed of continuously appealing from rulings of the Speaker. The Speaker of the house is chosen by the members of the house to preside at its sessions. If there is one rule that is followed by the government at Westminster, above all others, it is that the ruling

of the Speaker shall be respected by the house. Someone has to give the final decision. Where it is obvious that the Speaker is deciding in accordance with rules which hon. members themselves have made for the protection of freedom of discussion and debate, then every time the Speaker's ruling is challenged and an effort is made to have it appear that the Speaker has not given a just and fair ruling, to that extent correct procedure in the House of Commons suffers a heavy blow which, in the course of time, will have far-reaching reactions.

I wish to say this to hon. members about this matter of appealing from the Speaker's ruling. I venture to say that every hon. member of this house knew very well that when the Speaker decided that a certain amendment was not in order because it did away altogether with the original motion, the Speaker was giving a correct decision. They must have known that. Yet they appealed from the ruling of the Speaker and what is—

Mr. KNOWLES: I rise to a point of order—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Sit down.

Mr. KNOWLES: I rise to a point of order.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Sit down.

Mr. KNOWLES: The Prime Minister is referring to a decision given by Your Honour and voted upon by this house. I submit that he has no right to discuss a matter that has already been settled, and that he is entirely out of order.

Mr. MACDONNELL (Muskoka-Ontario): Or to impugn our honesty. He is impugning the honesty of everyone who voted against it.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: My hon. friends may say what they like.

Mr. FLEMING: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Sit down.

Mr. FLEMING: On a point of order, is it not against the rules of the house for an hon. member to reflect upon a vote cast by any other member of the house? The Prime Minister is reflecting upon the honesty of the votes cast by hon. members on this side of the house on an appeal from your ruling, Mr. Speaker, and to do so is absolutely against the rules of this house.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: The point I was making was, I think, perfectly clear. Hon.