

*Procedure and Organization*

ambiguous and which it must leave to Your Honour's interpretation. It is a violation of the privileges of this house for the government to impose this question on the house, and more so particularly, because it is backed by closure.

Only you, Sir, can now stop this violation of the privileges of the House of Commons. You, Sir, as have been your predecessors through the centuries, are the guardian of the rights of the House of Commons. When you go to the Senate, Sir, there is a ceremony in which you re-enact the assertion of your authority and parliament's authority over the Crown. It is to you, sir, that we must look for protection.

We have discussed this motion and this proposed new rule. We have negotiated, but there has been no evidence that representatives of the government had any serious intention to reach a settlement. There was no discussion until debate had gone on for more than a week. There was no discussion until the government became convinced we meant business and that debate would be sustained. When the government house leader realized this, he began discussions. May I put it this way, Sir: when Caesar returned from the west word went out that all talk must stop.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Stanfield:** There is nothing more that we in the opposition can do to prevent this violation of parliament—unless we are prepared to so disrupt the business of parliament that it cannot proceed. And we do not intend to do that. I did not come to parliament to destroy it. I would like to be helpful.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

● (5:10 p.m.)

**Mr. Stanfield:** The rule which has been invoked is not often used. It is difficult to interpret and I regret, sir, that you have been placed in this difficult position. As a matter of fact if circumstances in the house had been different, I would have suggested that you might consider resigning as Speaker as a means of protesting against the exercise of arbitrary authority by this government. But I say to Your Honour that I believe your continuance as Speaker is essential to the continuation of this parliament. Your Honour enjoys the respect of every member of this house.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

[Mr. Stanfield.]

**Mr. Stanfield:** Your Honour's role has not been easy in recent days. It is not easy today, and it may not be easy in the coming sessions because this house has taken on an ugly complexion. There is no doubt that feelings are running deep and strong. The tragedy is that there was no need for it.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Stanfield:** It is only Your Honour who can save this parliament and make it constructive. It is the respect that we all have for Your Honour that will hold this parliament together. I am sorry to add to your responsibility today, but the responsibility is there.

The decision on this point is vital to the future of parliament. I believe it will determine future responsible parliamentary government in this country. I call upon Your Honour not only to declare that this motion contravenes the privileges of this house, not merely to call this to the attention of the house, but that under this rule, in Your Honour's capacity as Speaker, Your Honour should refuse to put this motion to the house because it violates the privileges of this house.

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Minister of Manpower and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, we have listened to 40 minutes of pure tribute to the rules of parliament. It surprises me that the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) should exploit a point of order to secure the floor today, which they could not secure normally under the rules of this house.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Is the hon. member rising on a point of order?

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Yes, I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. There is a rule in this house against the imputing of motives. That applies not only to the remark of the minister but to the laughter from the other side. I raised this point of order this afternoon out of genuine concern for the rules and procedures of this House of Commons and for no other reason.

**Mr. Speaker:** I am sure the hon. minister was not imputing motives.

**Mr. Woolliams:** I rise on the same point of order, Mr. Speaker. Surely if the minister is not imputing motives to the member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) and the