

The Address—Mr. Diefenbaker

bership of this House during the question period. Only recently I was in the United Kingdom and spent several days in the gallery of the House of Commons at Westminster. Ministers there give answers. The first questions to them are questions on the order paper, but the supplementary questions are of a nature most devastating to ministers who are endeavouring to delude—I did not say deceive—endeavouring to delude by using a volume of words to conceal the facts. No matter how short a period or how long a period this House lasts, I would like to see a committee set up for the purpose of reviewing the rules of the House because, Sir, as I look back over a period of almost 33 years in this chamber and think of the greats throughout those years, I can only say that parliament lived before the changed rules so mangled the rights of members as to render the question period an innocuous exercise.

One learns. I think that every day I learn, even now in the autumn, in the golden autumn of my life. This institution is a great teacher. Through the years I followed the course of listening to the maiden speeches of hon. members. I could mention two or three. I have sent them messages after their speeches were delivered, regardless of party politics, for this institution will only be the cathedral of freedom it should be when members express themselves with that capacity and ability that were apparent in the mover and the seconder of the Address in Reply and will, I know, become even more apparent as numbers of these young men and women make the most difficult speech that any of them will ever make in their lives, their maiden speech.

I think, too, of the two youngest members of the House of Commons. Thanks to the legislation introduced by the government we have a member in the House, the hon. member for Hamilton-Wentworth (Mr. O'Sullivan), who became a Member of Parliament at the age of twenty.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: May he ultimately become another William Pitt the Younger. I think, too, of another hon. member who represents a constituency with a quadruple name, Wellington-Grey-Dufferin-Waterloo (Mr. Beatty), who is brilliant and able. It is a great thing when those who have been here over the years see coming into this institution those in their youth who, in the years ahead, will make their contribution to this country. I cannot fail either to mention that for the first time in all its history we have the third brother of a distinguished parliamentary family in our midst. The late Senator Horner has already had two sons in the House of Commons, another elected recently, and they tell me that there are three more coming on!

• (1510)

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: Up to the present time, there has been no break in the high standard of their political objectives.

Circumstances made it impossible for me to be here the other day to listen to the speech of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield). However, I read that speech, a thoroughly statesmanlike one. As I entered the House on

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

that occasion the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) was in the penultimate paragraph of what had apparently been a very long speech. Were he here now, but he has left as he so often does, I would refer to that speech. I realize all the difficulties of a prime minister, Sir, and with the greatest sincerity I say to you that there were portions of that speech unworthy of a prime minister.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: Our relationship has always been of a friendly nature, but I must say that for him to drag up that petty, shrewish and niggling suggestion the other day that has won elections in Quebec in the past, was something that I would not have expected to fall from his lips. I thought there was a new reform, that he was a penitent following the election. I have reason to believe that. He explained the reason for the outcome of the election as being the result of an incomplete communication. Well, I wonder what sort of information that million dollar menagerie of his gave him? Desks, subdesks and top desks, and yet he was not getting the feeling of the Canadian people. I hope that one of the first things he will do will be to demobilize that group.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: I said that I thought he was a penitent. How many of you saw the picture of him going to Government House to advise His Excellency on the outcome of the election? He was dressed in a leather jacket, with no tie; the nearest approach to being in sackcloth without the ashes.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: In the face of all this, he produced that speech the other day. It has been a strange thing to watch the performance since then. In Saskatchewan we used to have bush pilots who flew by the seat of their pants and when they were in difficulty they threw some of the cargo overboard. I am glad the Prime Minister has thrown away some of the cabinet cargo and put others in small containers.

Mr. Speaker, it is a serious matter when the Prime Minister pretends that he has seen the error of his ways. There has been a part reformation in the House. Today, we see some of these ministers! There were weeks and months on end when we could not identify them because they were not here. That was the first lesson that we endeavoured to inculcate throughout the past four years, that ministers should be here and now they are. The quality of the answers they give, however, has not materially improved.

It is interesting that he who condemned the monarchy and ridiculed it has, in the twinkling of an eye, become a monarchist.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I am going to establish what he did over a period of time in that connection.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): What is—