

The Address—Mr. Deachman

members, through the committees structure and through changes in the rules, will have opportunity to a greater extent than ever before to exercise the authority and the rights which we as private members must exercise.

• (4:50 p.m.)

There are many ways by which this can be done and I am not at this time, Mr. Speaker, going to go into them. As a member of the procedure committee I consider it my responsibility to wait until the committee is in session to bring forward my ideas. I hope, however, that we will have an opportunity to change, to moderate and to improve our antediluvian and anachronistic practices. I think we are farther behind in this regard than any nation in the commonwealth. There are many reasons for that and I do not think I need to deal with them at this stage. I do not want to usurp the functions of the chairman of this committee, but as a member of the committee I would invite hon. members to bring forward their ideas since it is literally impossible for all private members to appear before the committee.

As you may know Mr. Speaker, there is a very interesting practice in the United Kingdom under which the very distinguished Speaker, Right Hon. Dr. King, the party whips and party house leaders do appear before a committee considering procedure. The proceedings of this committee are conducted with the help and assistance of these distinguished members of the House of Commons in Westminster. There are transcripts made of the committee proceedings. We find, however, that the House of Commons in the United Kingdom, the Congress of the United States, the House of Representatives and the Senate in Australia are all struggling with the same problem. They are all feeling the frustration of the private members who desire very earnestly to make some contribution to the government of the country, but the rules do not permit them to do so. They find the government becoming increasingly powerful and less and less inclined to listen to the views of members. They are trying to work out a means of accommodation between the necessity for carrying on the multitudinous activities of the country and at the same time reserving to private member every opportunity to intervene, when in their view they have a duty to do so.

In this country, Mr. Speaker, with its diverse economic and geographical conditions, it is more than ever essential that this right be acquired. I hope that hon. members who

have been in this house for some time and who have, I am sure, experienced the difficulties and frustrations, sometimes the agony, of attempting to make their contribution on behalf of their constituents or their country, will let us have their views. I believe that only in that way can a consensus be arrived at. I believe this is essential. I think we are at the crossroads because of the activities of the government which I have mentioned, and so there must be some considerable reform of our procedure in the near future or else, in my humble opinion, the institutions of democracy as we know them will pass out of existence.

Mr. Grant Deachman (Vancouver Quadra): Mr. Speaker, while I have been sitting here this afternoon listening to the other speakers in this throne speech debate I was informed that Margaret Konantz, who was a member of this house in the years 1963 to 1965, had died while in Fredericton where she was preparing to address a gathering on the subject of UNICEF. As you know, Mr. Speaker, she was the Canadian president of UNICEF and had spent many years of devotion to the interests of children. I know that everyone in this house will be most saddened to learn of the passing of one of Canada's great ladies. I can do no more this afternoon in honouring her than perhaps convey to the house some of the achievements of this lady, for they are worth recording in *Hansard* as the achievements of a magnificent woman.

She was born Margaret McTavish Rogers in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Her mother's family was connected with the Hudson's Bay Company. Her great great grandfather, Sir George Simpson, was the first governor of the Hudson's Bay Company and one of Canada's outstanding pioneers in the development of the country. Her mother, Edith Rogers, was the first woman elected to the Manitoba legislature which Margaret Konantz herself adorned with such distinction. Not long after her marriage to Gordon Konantz in 1922, she began a long life of service to Canada in addition to rearing her family of one daughter and two sons through whom she gained seven grandchildren.

From 1924 to 1929 she was a volunteer worker and treasurer of a convalescent hospital in the city of Winnipeg. In 1929, and for the next two or three years, she was associated with the Junior League of Winnipeg and responsible for starting the Ellice Avenue Thrift Shop. She became Canadian representative from 1933 to 1935 of the Association of