

Procedure and Organization

want to waste the limited time I have pointing out the differences between England and this country. God help us if we are to be like England, with the troubles they have now, let alone the troubles they have in their parliament! We have yet to throw things back and forth or come to fisticuffs. If the condescending, autocratic, arrogant manner displayed in the last few days continues in this parliament for the next few years, we may have to behave in that manner.

By this arbitrary act of conflict and confrontation, we are beginning a period which could well stamp the 28th parliament as the sad and sick parliament. Why? We did not make it that way. The government brought in Rule 75c. The reason the opposition has been united, man for man, as it has rarely been united before, is not because of any one act or bill that the government has brought in about which the opposition feels so strongly. There may be such bills in the future. It is because this whole procedure has been so necessary. It has betrayed the hopes and aspirations of all of us that there would be a new day in parliament and there would not be conflict and confrontation.

The only conclusion I can reach as to why we have this dilemma and why there is this conflict and confrontation is that there is a fundamental difference in the concept of parliament which is predicated on two thoughts that have run throughout this debate. The first is the divine right of the majority to rule on any issue, even the rules of parliament itself. These are not the rules of government, they are the rules of parliament. The word "participation" has been replaced by the words "program and programming". I will not waste too much time talking about the philosophy of the divine right of the numbers game, the majority always rules, the majority is right. The hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) and others have belaboured that.

The Prime Minister, in a debate a few years ago, suggested that the government is the master of the house and the majority governs. I will not dwell too much on the fundamental fallacy of a man coming into this chamber and saying, "we are the masters of this house." No matter how *Hansard* might try to clarify that statement, I was in the house and heard the Prime Minister say it. I agree the Liberal Party was elected to be the government. They were given a mandate to lead. There is not a piece of legislation to which they can point in this 28th parliament

[Mr. Nowlan.]

and say that the opposition held up this item on the order paper.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Nowlan: They won an election, Mr. Speaker, but the point is no man is the master of this house. This afternoon, in an agonizing moment on a point of order, Mr. Speaker, said he was not the master of the house, but a servant.

Every member has equal stature in this house. Because a government wins a mandate, they cannot say they are the master of the land or the master of Canadians. They happen to be the government with a mandate to govern. That is all we ask, Mr. Speaker. There is no other institution like this in Canada. It symbolizes the heart of this nation. The members in this house personify a cross-section of the Canadians we represent in occupation, religion and geography. We in this house represent all Canadians, including native Canadians and those who have been discriminated against. The two members who came to this house in 1968, the hon. member for Kamloops-Cariboo (Mr. Marchand) and the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander) help us to represent all Canadians. This is what parliament is about.

Among the members of this house are lawyers, doctors, engineers and professors. There are also silly Canadians, stupid Canadians and bright Canadians. Sometimes in this chamber when members do not agree with the point of view of another member, they say it is a silly or stupid speech. We symbolize and personify 20 million Canadians. That is why it is sometimes hard to swallow that the Prime Minister, who was immersed in a classroom and had a protected existence for many years, finds it difficult to appreciate and listen to all types of speeches in this house. At times I can sympathize with him. But, Mr. Speaker, I was amazed that that same Prime Minister could call something which is fundamental to the rules of the house a stupid filibuster after only 10 hours of debate and after six Liberal, six Conservative, four N.D.P. and two Cr ditiste members had spoken, a total of only 19. That is when the Prime Minister said it was a stupid filibuster. On the same day, he said that 80 per cent of the question period was hypocrisy. The fear of the opposition is that if he will make such a statement with so little proof, who is to say this man would not say that 80 per cent of the debates in this house are hypocritical and wasteful. Who is to say that in a few years he