

Procedure and Organization

caucus in order to get them to toe the line. This has happened in the past—

An hon. Member: Here comes Macdonald.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I have just been apprised of the fact that the gauleiter has entered the chamber. Perhaps he heard me talking about what goes on in the Liberal caucus room and what pressures are brought to bear on Liberal backbenchers to make them toe the line.

Perhaps he is the guy who threatens to cut off the campaign funds if they do not vote as they are supposed to vote. Perhaps he is the fellow who tells the Liberal backbenchers that if they do not toe the line the Liberal party will run another candidate against them and kick them out at the next nominating convention, just as they did with Ralph Cowan.

An hon. Member: Where is Ralph Cowan now?

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Where is the element of democracy and governmental responsibility in the Liberal party? They could not stomach Ralph Cowan's criticism, so they got rid of him. He would not toe the line; he was not subservient to the dictates of the party as are the rest of them over there. I know that every member of the Liberal party does not fall into that category. In fact, the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Blair), whom I saw earlier but who is not there now, is probably extremely happy about the events today because he was chosen, as the chairman of the committee, to act as a pawn. He will soon see his work come to fruition with the assistance of the closure motion introduced by the government house leader.

• (8:50 p.m.)

I regret also that the honourable and empty barrell from Burnaby-Seymour (Mr. Perrault) is not here because at one time, and this intrigues me—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I think that even if hon. members take part in this debate with feeling and passion some respect for certain values should still be maintained. I am not sure that anything in particular the hon. member said is out of order, but much of it according to my humble standards—and my standards may be different from those of other hon. members—is not in accordance with my views as to how a debate should be

[Mr. Howard (Skeena).]

conducted in this chamber. But again I say, that I cannot put my finger on anything that is particularly or especially out of order or that is not parliamentary. But in what the hon. member said, if this is the kind of debate we are going to have today, tomorrow, on Thursday or on other days, I wonder how long the House of Commons will survive.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I could not agree more with you. I wish you had some influence in the cabinet. I wish those who have brought all this about would heed your words, and would think on them overnight. I wish that last December the government house leader, who today proved that he was not very honest with parliament last December, had listened to your words then and would listen to them now. What the government house leader has done—and I say this with all respect to you and am not trying to be unparliamentary or offensive—has been to indicate how insincere he was last December with respect to rule 16A.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): He showed us today what is meant by programming because here was a seven months program to introduce an offensive rule change that would stifle debate and that would trample on the rights of the members of the opposition as well as government backbenchers, even though they may not care much about them. Everything leads up to the imposition of closure today and tomorrow in order to get another form of closure written into the rule book. The President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) proved to us today that these so-called negotiations to which he was referring were a sham, that he would accept nothing in the way of a compromise, and that he was talking out of both sides of his mouth.

Mr. McIlraith: You were the ones who would accept nothing.

Mr. Howard (Skeena): I am glad to see that the Solicitor General (Mr. McIlraith) has finally awakened and has injected himself into this debate after having been dealt with rather unkindly by the Prime Minister at some point, in my opinion. I would think that, of all the people in the cabinet, the Solicitor General would exhibit independence. I hope he will stand up tomorrow night and vote against closure. Will you do that, George? Where is your courage now?