

Procedure and Organization

rule 16A. The matter was returned to committee, and we all remember how the chairman of the committee was embarrassed by the treatment afforded him by the President of the Privy Council. The determination and dictatorial attitude of the President of the Privy Council is unbecoming and unworthy of a minister of the Crown.

Some say the government is trying to blackmail the opposition. This session was to end on June 27. One wonders why the government left this vital matter until the end of the session. Did it hope that hon. members would be tired, anxious to go home, and would therefore dispose of this matter? If so, that indicates government thinking. If the government is not trying to blackmail us then, in the alternative, it is showing a tremendous disrespect and disregard for the principles of opposition members. Its actions are degrading parliament.

Consider the lack of a quorum in this house last Thursday, Mr. Speaker. Without the integrity, intelligence and co-operation of Mr. Speaker and his ruling on that important matter, the government would have degraded parliament even more. We were working to rule when the quorum vote was taken. As I recall, many hon. members of this house and many members of the public were annoyed with the employees of Air Canada when those employees worked to rule during the recent difficulties. I recall an Air Canada employee at Malton Airport telling me to check a small handbag, and I recall being annoyed. Yet that employee was merely working to rule, just as we were in this house when an hon. member drew to your attention that there was no quorum. If our post office employees were to work to rule, the chaos in the post office would be greater even than that brought on by the minister.

An hon. Member: That is not possible.

Mr. Gilbert: Last Friday the Prime Minister made a disgraceful, unworthy and disappointing comment about the conduct of parliament. When I spoke words of welcome to members of the Liberal party on the Friday after the quorum vote, I was greeted in a most unworthy manner. When the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) rose to his feet, even before he had a chance to say a word, the members of the Liberal party made known their feelings of displeasure. On top of that we had to contend with the Prime Minister's schoolboy sauciness when he described this debate as a stupid filibuster and the attitude of opposition

members as hypocritical. It is possible that his arrogance and ignorance at that time exceeded that of Mr. C. D. Howe in the 1956 pipeline debate. This government is a dictatorship by a dilettante. His hatchet man is the President of the Privy Council, and the Liberal party members who support him are mere hush-puppies who play little role in this house. The Liberal party needs a man with the convictions and courage of the former hon. member for York-Humber, Mr. Ralph Cowan. He called a spade a spade, and he acted as the conscience of the Liberal party when it abused the exercise of its powers. We need men like Ralph Cowan in this house. More than ever, the Liberals need Ralph Cowan back.

An hon. Member: Bring back Ralph Cowan.

Mr. Gilbert: The only one remotely like him here is the hon. member for York East (Mr. Otto) who brought to the attention of hon. members the attitude of the government towards its supporters when they are in committee. His revelation has been very worth while and we only hope that he will be more active in persuading other Liberal party members to stop being mere rubberstamps and to take an active part in the work of this house. When I consider the performance of the portly potentate for High Park (Mr. Deakon), who seems to suffer from mental paralysis when important issues come up, I become disappointed that Ralph Cowan is no longer in the house.

Rule 75c will apply to the backbenchers of all parties and I think the hon. member for Scarborough East (Mr. O'Connell), who was one of the whiz kids of the Walter Gordon days, who has great experience in economic matters and in matters affecting foreign ownership and who has made a great contribution to our Canadian Indians and Eskimos, ought to remember that. We hope he will take a more active part as a backbencher in the debates of this house. The same goes for the hon. member for Kamloops-Cariboo (Mr. Marchand), who should be taking the lead here when Indian questions are discussed. He seems to be tongue tied. I hope he realizes that if the government adopts rule 75c he will be even more tongue tied.

During the past year we have heard little from the hon. member for York West (Mr. Givens), who is a former mayor of Toronto and has considerable experience in urban affairs, housing and urban transportation. On numerous occasions he has told the press that