

Procedure and Organization

it is not. Hon. members opposite will then realize how unfair they were to bring in Standing Order 75c. I ask them to vote the way they feel they should, instead of acting like trained seals who do what they are told.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order. I ask all hon. members of the house to cooperate with the Chair, and I would ask the hon. member to restrict his remarks to the amendment before the house.

Mr. Carter: In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I ask hon. members opposite how they can let this sort of thing happen. They get up in the mornings and shave the same as I, so let them act like men. Let them vote the way they feel they should, in which case I am sure they will vote against this unjust proposal. Let these great orators across the aisle, who sit in their seats making snide remarks, stand up and express their views. And when the time comes to cast their vote, let them vote against this unpopular measure.

Mr. Robert C. Coates (Cumberland-Colchester North): Mr. Speaker, there seems to be a great deal of jealousy among members on the other side of the house. Earlier today one of them asked for the institution of a rotation system for government members so they could have their holidays. These poor unfortunate souls do not like to be here now the heat is on. Let me tell my hon. friends on the other side of the house that when the snows are coming down they will still be here.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Coates: The type of comment made by the house leader yesterday guarantees that they will not even get a Christmas vacation.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Don't be too hard on them. It is at least nice to see them here on a Friday afternoon.

Mr. Coates: As the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) says, it is nice to see them here. It is nice to see them participating in the democratic process, which is what parliament and this debate is all about. We are here to defend democracy.

• (3:40 p.m.)

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Coates: I enjoy debate, and I hope to enjoy many more days like this because, unless this autocratic government bends, it

[Mr. Carter.]

will break. It will founder on the shoals of rule 75c. The people of this country know that the opposition is protecting its rights and their rights; that it is protecting its freedoms and their freedoms, and that it will not permit an autocratic government to take away any of our rights.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Coates: The rules of the House of Commons have been distilled over 900 years. They have been formed in all parliaments as a result of agreements between political parties. Rules have never been imposed on parliaments by governments. They are not government rules. They are rules affecting all members of Parliament, and they apply to all hon. members. That cannot be said of rule 75c. This rule has been introduced for the convenience of the executive. Under the parliamentary system of parliament it is not an acceptable rule. It is a tool of the executive. We have been told over and over again that parliament is not efficient enough. Many people are led to believe that parliament and not the executive runs the nation. The executive may be given responsibility for running the nation, but it has no right to push parliament around and to limit reasonable debate on matters coming before parliament. The government now is saying, "We do not like the rules as they are and want to change them. We want the power to say that in three days a bill is to become law and the House of Commons shall pass that law in that time. Debate is to be limited." Well, Mr. Speaker, the opposition does not go along with that proposition. It will never agree to it.

A great deal of harmony between the parties has been evident during the present session. At Christmas we accepted a new set of rules which were agreed to by members on all sides. In the resulting atmosphere of harmony legislation went through the house with a minimum of debate in most cases. We considered that our opposition was responsible and felt that the government was most fortunate in having its programs considered in an atmosphere of harmony. Then, what happened? We were all told parliament would rise on June 27 and come back in October. People in the country were saying, "Parliament is adopting a businesslike attitude and it is evident the new rules are working." Then, the government house leader and some of his colleagues made the serious mistake of assuming that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) could be pushed around. They thought after a couple of days debate on any