

Procedure and Organization

from within. I ask members on the other side of the house carefully to consider that statement. Let it not be said that we in this parliament allowed the government to destroy itself. Let it not be said that in the year 1969 we allowed the Prime Minister of Canada to destroy this institution which all of us, when we came here starry-eyed, hoped in some way to strengthen.

Mr. John Gilbert (Broadview): Mr. Speaker, after hearing the speech of the hon. member for Simcoe North (Mr. Rynard), I feel very humble as I stand in my place to participate in this debate. It is with a sad and heavy heart that I do so. I am also shocked and ashamed that some of the senior cabinet ministers have not taken a vital part in this debate. I observe the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Laing) in his seat and wonder why he and others of his colleagues have not persuaded the cabinet, and more especially the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald), to bring some sense of co-operation into this debate.

Many Canadians have said that we are suffering physically from the heat and are making a great sacrifice. We may be making a great physical sacrifice, but when we think of the consequences that would flow from the adoption of rule 75c, this is a mere nothing in comparison. We intend not only to suffer physically from the heat but also to apply some political heat in order to bring about some changes to this particular report.

Many of us are making a sacrifice by being away from our families and friends and by not participating in some of the activities and work in our constituencies. But this matters not in view of the serious consequences which would flow from adoption of this report. It is sad that we have reached an impasse on the rules, particularly in regard to the proposed rule 75A, 75B and 75c. We have reached a senseless confrontation which has backed the government and the opposition into their respective corners, that has generated firm convictions, ill-feelings and reminded us of the December impasse on rule 16A.

It has been said, and I repeat, that we would not object to remaining here if we were to discuss some of the serious matters that confront Canada today. During the last few days we have been reminded of the crisis on the farms, and the government's inability to cope with it. We have been reminded of the serious problem of inflation and the increase in the lending rate to chartered banks by the Bank of Canada. We would not

[Mr. Rynard.]

object to staying here to debate such issues as these. Other matters, such as the serious housing shortage, unemployment and high taxes are also of concern to every member of the house. Yet we are in this house today discussing rules 75A, 75B and 75c, and this fact tends to destroy the goodwill that has been built up since the beginning of the session.

I think of some of the tensions and acrimony engendered in this house since I represented the riding of Broadview during the period 1965 to 1968. I refer to tension not only between persons but regarding some of the great issues facing Canada. For example, I recall the tension and acrimony that was generated when the opposition defeated the government on the postal rates increase and also on the imposition of additional personal taxes. In the result, much ill feeling was created between members.

Then in June 1968, the people of Canada spoke and returned to the house a majority government. An attempt was made to improve the procedure and organization of the house by restructuring the committee system and by imposing time limitations on debates like the Speech from the Throne and the budget, and debate on certain bills. Then, to top it all off, a serious attempt was made to apportion the year so that we might have a definite allocation of time for debating certain business of the house.

All of this was done in a spirit of co-operation, and this was very encouraging. The members of the committee on procedure and organization are reasonable and talented men who are sincere and knowledgeable. They contributed much valuable work, and in many areas there was unanimous agreement. But a bomb was exploded in the house by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) when, after general agreement on rule 75A and 75B, he brought forward rule 75c. It is this which has triggered the ill feeling generated since that time. He has taken a stone wall approach and government members have become mere puppets to be counted only as heads in the votes that ensue.

● (4:20 p.m.)

One looks back to last December and to rule 16A with not too much happiness. I think we all recall the efforts of the opposition to bring about change and how successful we were in making the government realize that it would be a serious mistake to adopt proposed