

basis of their broad perspective, as being either better or worse in this area or that area than previous sessions.

Newcomers, some of us who have been here for only a few sessions, may be less objective and more impatient. Perhaps we are comparing it, not with what has been but with what it could be or should be. Each member, then, has his or her own personal value system by which he or she assesses what Parliament should be. What I am about to say, then, is certainly a personal reaction as I keep in mind the constituents whom I try to represent. I do not pretend they are the views of other members or of the government or of my Liberal party.

My assessment of what has happened in this session so far to date is that we have worked very hard and very long; that we have met a host of very urgent and pressing problems; and that the government has launched on a courageous effort to deal with many major and long-range issues. I also observe that the existing parliamentary process suffers from many outmoded, antiquated procedures that were meant for a totally different era and situation, and that this system of schedules and rules and attitudes is becoming less and less capable of dealing with matters of state in the 1980s.

To put it gently, our present parliamentary system engenders hostility, invites abuse and misuse, and in the eyes of the public is increasingly earning disappointment, if not cynicism.

Perhaps those who have worked with the system for a long time or have learned how to manipulate its rules may derive ample satisfaction. Perhaps they know how to use the system, but in the view of many in the public who watch television I am afraid I hear that business is not done here, it is blocked here. We remember the scenes from the constitutional debate. We recall the extent to which members would go to try to inhibit debate or progress in the affairs of this Parliament.

I said that in this session we had successfully addressed ourselves to many fundamental issues. We have hardly been toying with superficial matters or tinkering or fine tuning. To the discomfort of many, we have bitten the bullet and come to grips with such issues as the Constitution, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and all that that entails. We have had a budget debate. We have insisted on the right of Canadians to claim their fair share and control of their own natural resources, oil and gas. We have seen the development of a national energy policy that embraces all phases of the energy issue, including exploration, diversification, energy alternatives and conservation, for decades to come. This Parliament has sought to adjust our economy to changing market conditions, including priority on research and development. We have undertaken risks to address global issues that impinge upon us as threats to our survival and that of billions of other people, whether they include environmental pollution, demographic explosion, the suffering of millions of refugees, the horrors of violence and terrorism, or the entire story summed up by the words "North-South relations".

Yes, this Parliament has tackled a very large package of issues in a fast moving world that will not wait. Whether or not one is satisfied with what the federal government is doing in each or any of these areas is another question. Indeed, it is

the task of the opposition and the media and every one of us to analyse and criticize, and if we can to suggest profound, alternate solutions.

Personally, I have not been stimulated by the opposition, which from where I sit seems to have been more preoccupied with fishing expeditions to find scandals, and to scramble to get "onside", with public opinion polls, than it has been to generate rationally the challenges and the debate that these enormously complex issues that I have mentioned deserve.

But whether the government or the opposition has done well or poorly is obviously a matter of opinion. I have expressed mine; to that I am entitled. But my point and major concern here is not to play that game. Rather, it is that our parliamentary system has not lived up to our present day needs. If we do not pay attention to this we are inviting disillusionment in our political system, and nothing could be more tragic.

Like children, nations, parties and politicians play games. But the games we play are games with our own future. Sometimes they are games of bluff, of posturing and pretence. They are dangerous games. Today we need to move away from political games and move toward political management. We need to move toward communication, toward reason, co-operation and, above all, toward dialogue. If we do not take the steps to reform our system, we will lose out to the extremists and the violent who will offer quick answers to those who are becoming impatient with our ponderous and obsolete game playing.

The reforms of which I speak are really not my ideas; these reforms of Parliament are not new ideas. They come from the opposition, they come from the New Democratic Party, they come from our benches, they come from committees that have met year after year. For some reason, however, we have not taken the step to bring about parliamentary reform.

Perhaps we need to challenge those guardians of the past who cling to a system which has long passed us by. When we ask what the suggestions are that have been made on all sides of the House to reform this Parliament and make it more effective, what we have heard over and over again is, let us work for ways to increase participation and involvement; let us encourage the excellent experiments of all-party task forces which have just begun; let us try to be more effective and better organized in our parliamentary committee; let us give more members an opportunity for debate; let us adjust the rules; let us consider more free votes in the House and fewer motions of confidence; let us question the archaic system of bells and surprise votes. In short, let us treat one another with greater respect, as adults, with a schedule which will permit sound management and organization.

Mr. McDermid: Tell that one to your leader.

Mr. de Corneille: I suggest that these are things on which all parties can work and which would find all-party agreement. Perhaps some of the venom and the vitriolic accusations we have heard in the past week would not be made and would not be obstructing our parliamentary procedure.