

Procedure and Organization

those who showed some lack of manners in dealing with the Prime Minister in the west, but I would say that part of the trouble is that in this house the sound suggestions which have come from this side of the house to deal with western problems have been repudiated. I would say also that he should show a greater respect for organized, reasonable and proper debate in this chamber and not thereby encourage that kind of thing outside.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Macquarrie: All around us we see ill organized, ill directed patterns of dissent and hear on every hand the raucous cry of those who would destroy and not build. Why do we not unite to preserve, to sustain and to strengthen this essential forum of national opinion, this indispensable organ of the people's will? That is what it is. It is not, I hope, too late for these people across the way to reconsider. This is my plea to the government: desist before it is too late; reflect, consult, and abandon rigidity in favour of reason. Let us preserve the essence of the parliamentary system to which at our best we are all or should be dedicated, every one of us.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Max Saltsman (Waterloo): Mr. Speaker, on previous occasions it has been my privilege to have listened with pleasure to the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie). I cannot recall an occasion in the past when he has been more eloquent, more sincere, and has expressed more adequately his concern for this great institution. I therefore would wish my first words to be ones of congratulation to the hon. member for Hillsborough, and indeed to all hon. members who have participated in this debate.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to observe the special nature and condition of this debate. Surely it is obvious that never have so much effort and thought been put forward by a united opposition as in this debate. I have observed that members who in the past have normally spoken from very rough notes, as is the practice in this house, have engaged in a great deal of preparation and thought about what is involved in rule 75c. They have come here well prepared to express their great concern over the effect 75c will have on this institution.

I wish to observe also that in my recollection this is one of the few occasions when not a single member of the opposition has risen to

[Mr. Macquarrie.]

support a government measure. This is unusual. As I look back on most of the debates in this house I can recall that seldom has the government brought in a proposal when there has not been a willingness on the part of one of the opposition parties, or of some members in the opposition, to support the measure. A member of parliament does not like to break with his party. Yet there are occasions when a member feels compelled to do so. You will not find this situation in this particular debate, Mr. Speaker.

I should like to recall previous occasions. Let me speak about the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) who, at great risk to his own position in his party, and to his eternal credit, had the courage to stand up and support the government measure in respect of the language bill, even though he wanted some changes made in it. Here was a new leader of a party who had the courage to say to those in his party who did not agree with him, "This is necessary." This is a tribute to his leadership.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Saltsman: I can also recall a previous occasion when the former leader of that same party, the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker), stood up in this house, with most members of his party opposed to him, arguing for everything he was worth for the abolition of capital punishment. To me it was a memorable occasion and one I shall never forget. Again it is a tribute to the character of the people who are members of parliament that on matters of principle which concern them they are not afraid to dissent from their party's position. I believe there is hardly a member in the opposition who, at some time or other, has not felt compelled because of reason, conscience or principle, to differ with his own party and take exception to some issue. But not on 75c.

• (12:50 p.m.)

If it is not obvious to those on the other side of the house, let me spell it out: We in the opposition are prepared to stay here as long as we can, and as long as it is possible to continue this debate. We shall do this to indicate our defiance of a measure which we believe will have a profound effect upon future freedoms of the house.

Yesterday the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) rose and in a graceful gesture offered the olive branch to the government. He offered them a chance to get out of the terrible position in which they have put themselves. The government could