

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, March 18, 1969

The house met at 2 p.m.

PRIVILEGE

MR. ROSE—FAILURE TO ANSWER REPRESENTATIONS IN ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

Mr. Mark Rose (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon on a question of privilege. I shall be brief but wish to point out that my brevity bears no relation to the strength of my feelings in respect of the matter I am about to raise. Your Honour did not accept the question I asked on March 12 and as a result that question was set down to be debated on the late adjournment debate. Your Honour announced that the question would be debated last night and at the time of your announcement a fair number of hon. members were in the house. Yet last evening, after I had finished speaking for seven minutes, no minister or parliamentary secretary was present in the house to reply to my question. Several hon. members then present noticed this. The hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie), who also wished to ask a question expected an answer from the treasury benches. Frankly, hon. members then present were amazed that there was no reply from the government side of the house.

I am aware, sir, that the rules of the house do not require government members to answer questions set for the late show. When they fail to do so however that is an insult to the house, and I hope this practice will not multiply. The rules were changed to permit adjournment debate in order that we may have greater parliamentary efficiency. I submit that when hon. members co-operate with Your Honour in agreeing to have questions debated on the late show, instead of challenging decisions of the Chair and holding up house procedures, those hon. members and their constituents should not be treated with the kind of arrogance that was displayed last night.

In conclusion, I hope that the President of the Privy Council will look into this matter and make certain that the situation is rectified and does not reoccur.

THE LATE HON. JOHN BRACKEN

TRIBUTES TO FORMER LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, there is a matter that I think should be brought to the attention of the house. I refer to the passing of the Hon. John Bracken, former Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in the house and a member of the Privy Council of Canada who, over many years, gave devoted service not only in the province of Manitoba where he was premier for almost 21 years, but here in the House of Commons as Leader of the Conservative party and as Leader of the Opposition.

His devotion to Canada, his sincerity and, above all, his desire to make certain that all sectors of our country should receive equal attention and that there should be no economic disparities caused him to devote himself throughout the years to the welfare of agriculture in particular.

I first met him 59 years ago when he was a professor in the agricultural college at the University of Saskatchewan. I have known him through the intervening years and feel sure that the house would wish to pay tribute to one who was an ornament of this chamber and a great Canadian. At the same time may we extend to his wife, who throughout the years has been devoted to him in a way no words can express, the condolences of this chamber and the people of Canada.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of this party I wish to associate myself with the feelings of the right hon. gentleman for Prince Albert in expressing our admiration for a Canadian who gave himself to the public life of this country with such devotion and sincerity.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, may I on behalf of the hon. members of this party express our regret at the passing of the Hon. John Bracken. As a boy when I lived in Winnipeg I knew of him as the premier of that province. I came to know him personally over the years, and I think all who knew him were impressed by his quiet dignity and fine integrity. In his