

expectations and that the relationship was healthy. With television people say that this House does not represent them. It does not represent them because if you look at it from a political science point of view the real functions of government do not take place here. They take place in minister's offices, they take place in committees, and they take place in press conferences. What is left here is a shell. The shell does not represent anything but the shadow of its old self.

Very few great debates take place here. Very few votes that are not predictable take place here. Very few revealing questions are asked here. When the reality is shifted elsewhere people on television are left with just the shell of Parliament's former self.

Therefore we have to begin as colleagues to see our way through this. How do we reorganize the House of Commons so that people see us working in a way that is responsible and reflects their desire to have a government functioning on their behalf? Perhaps we should begin to shift the coverage on television to the committees.

All of us have sat on good committees. For example, I think of the work of a committee that I sat on when I first became a member, Standing Committee on Disabled Persons and International Human Rights Committee. That was a fine example of a committee working in a non-partisan or multi-party fashion in which motions were discussed beforehand. All the time I sat on it there was not one vote. Everyone agreed beforehand on what to do. There was a spirit of collegiality. Whenever any member did make a partisan comment he or she usually got a little note from an interest group saying: "We prefer that you don't make those comments about your colleagues. We prefer that you work together. The life of disabled people is too difficult to hear partisan remarks being made about what is going on".

It was a lesson to me to try to find ways to work with colleagues. I stand in the House as someone who is concerned that we must begin, and this motion is a beginning. I hope that the government side takes seriously the amendments presented on racism and sexism because it is time we upgraded ourselves and begin to learn a little bit more about how language used in a previous generation is very offensive to people.

### *Government Orders*

My colleague from Broadview—Greenwood, who just spoke a few minutes ago, and I represent the younger side of the House. This really is a generational thing. The people who grew up with one way of doing things have to learn that there is a nation out there that is much different. The composition of the House does not reflect the nation and in some respects the values of the nation.

We have to learn how to treat each other. Other people have mentioned that there is no other organization that gets into serious meetings in which the members divvy themselves up and say: "All right, here we have a budget of \$140 billion. Here we have a deficit". What corporation would then take its top 300 people and say: "All right, you sit on this side and you sit on that side and let's fight about how we are going to solve this problem?"

No one out there believes that is how to create a country. No one in here should believe that is the way to create a country. There is natural conflict. We want different things.

There are five parties represented here who have distinctly different notions of a country. We go to the people every three or four years and put those different ideas in front of them. We ask them for their consideration. We spend money, we advertise, and we try to convince people. When we come back to the House, those visions have to be blended with the reality that we have been asked by Canadians to work together and that there is a difference in this country about what to do or else we would not have different parties. There is a consensus that they want something done in common. I think we should all take that lesson. There is not one of us who does not go home on weekends and have people look us in the eye and ask what is this all about.

• (1420)

I can tell you that I was never embarrassed to be an academic, although academics are usually considered to be pretty flaky people. The comments made to me were done with at least a little bit of awe that I somehow got there by some rhyme or reason that should be respected. I used to think that in some respects being an academic was not exactly the highest status thing to be, but I can tell you, compared to being a member of Parliament, being an academic is a piece of cake. It is because the lack of respect that permeates, not only with the average viewer seeing us, but I think, interesting enough with the interest groups. One of the big changes in Canadian politics is the fact that interest groups think it is quite