

*Procedure and Organization*

motion today asks that we do not proceed with the motion they begged us last week to proceed with, in respect of which they said if we did not proceed with it it would be a breach of parliamentary principle. That is the issue. They do not read their former speeches. They are so busy with television and the press that they cannot remember what they said last week or the week before.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Baldwin:** On a point of order—

**Mr. MacEachen:** Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) on a point of order.

**Mr. Baldwin:** Let it be correctly known that the point raised by myself, by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) and by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) was not that this motion should be proceeded with but the other motion, the infamous motion put by the President of the Privy Council, should not be put. That was our position.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I think I should remind hon. members again that we are supposedly on a point of order. The point of order has reference to Standing Order 51, and I feel abandoned in that the hon. minister is not even referring to the Speaker.

**Mr. MacEachen:** Mr. Speaker, I assure you that there is in my mind nothing but the highest respect for the Chair

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. MacEachen:** In reply to the point made by the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin), Mr. Speaker, may I read from the speech of the Leader of the Opposition which has reference to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) and to this motion. The hon. member for Peace River just stated that they were fighting to oppose the motion of the President of the Privy Council. This is what the Leader of the Opposition had to say as recorded at page 11075 of *Hansard*:

What changed his mind was that there was a motion coming from this side of the house concerning the failure of the committee chairman to move concurrence in his report as he had been instructed to do.

**An hon. Member:** So what?

[Mr. MacEachen.]

**Mr. Baldwin:** The rule of anticipation.

**Mr. MacEachen:** The plain conclusion is that the purpose of members opposite was to have the motion for concurrence moved—

**Some hon. Members:** No, no.

**Mr. MacEachen:**—otherwise it would be unparliamentary.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I wonder if the minister might be allowed to continue. It is very difficult for the Chair to hear what is being said at the present time.

**Mr. MacEachen:** Mr. Speaker, I was delighted that today for the first time the British House of Commons has been reinstated in the minds of members of the opposition. We have listened to this debate for many days and for the first time today was there a reference made by the member for Winnipeg North Centre to the British House of Commons. We have heard the Reichstag mentioned more often in this house in this debate than the British house. Why is that? Because no member of the opposition can make a respectable argument about the procedures that we are proposing if they take a moment to compare them with those of the British house. So they have swept that under the rug.

Today, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre followed his point of privilege by quoting Bourinot on the principles which laid the basis for English parliamentary law. He went on to argue that it was unparliamentary and unconstitutional for a government, acting as a government, to propose a motion to change the rules of parliament. As I understand it that was the basic constitutional argument. Well, of course, strictly speaking what is before us is not a motion of the government. It is a motion from a standing committee, moved by the chairman, seeking concurrence in it. That is what is before the house, not a government motion. We could have had a government motion if hon. members had not opposed that idea. But the suggestion that it is unparliamentary, undemocratic and strikes at the basis of English parliamentary law for a government even to move a motion to change the rules drastically, is nothing but an invention from the mind of the member for Winnipeg North Centre.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. MacEachen:** Mr. Speaker, we know that one of the great objectives of the new Labour government of Great Britain was to