

Birthday Greetings

seconded by the hon. member for Lambton-Kent (Mr. Holmes):

That the federal government lend its full support to the native people in order that their planned celebrations will be such that the Canadian people will appreciate more fully the importance of these historic treaties.

Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 43 the motion requires unanimous consent. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: No.

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● (1410)

HOUSE OF COMMONS

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS TO MR. SPEAKER

Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca): Mr. Speaker, I rise under the provisions of Standing Order 43 to present a motion of urgent and pressing necessity. Number 43 has special significance today, this day being your forty-third birthday.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Yewchuk: I move, seconded by the hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Hargrave):

That this House wishes you a Happy Birthday.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

Mr. Joseph-Philippe Guay (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 43, I wish to move a motion of exceptional urgency.

I would like to support the hon. member who has just resumed his seat and wish you Happy Birthday. At the same time, that reminds me of a song that we often sing on occasions such as this one. I am sure I speak on behalf of all hon. members in this House by moving:

That your life be filled with success and happiness, peace and joy.

[English]

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, just to show that we are unanimous, I wish to make it clear that if the other hon. members had not presented their standing order 43 motions, I would have done so, to wish you the very best on your birthday number 43.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: I cannot resist saying that it is a sufficient crisis to encounter one's forty-third birthday. I hoped to keep the connection between Standing Order 43 and my age on this birthday secret. Obviously, I have not done very well. I am grateful for the sentiments expressed; thank you.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Mr. Neil.]

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

ALLEGATIONS OF INTERFERENCE BY JUDGE MACKAY—
REQUEST FOR PUBLIC INQUIRY

Mr. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I want to direct my question to the Prime Minister. While the chief justice of Quebec may be responsible for the management of some courts, the Prime Minister must accept responsibility for the management and impropriety of this government. In this light I ask the Prime Minister whether, in view of the serious admissions made yesterday by certain of his ministers, including, particularly, the admission of intervention by the Minister of Public Works, the Prime Minister is now prepared on reconsideration to appoint an independent commission, to conduct the kind of full, open inquiry which these admissions of ministerial intervention make necessary?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I agree, of course, with the premise to the question, as stated by the Leader of the Opposition. I explained to the House yesterday the basis of my decision. I shall repeat it briefly. It was that, in the case of two ministers, Mr. Speaker, their alleged intervention was directed toward judges who have not, to my knowledge, complained about it. I have the statement of my ministers, made publicly here, that they in no way tried to influence the judge. I take their word. Of course, I am prepared to hear the other side of the question. I think it is proper for the chief justice of the Superior Court of Quebec who is entrusted with the administration of these courts to hear the views of the two judges who, to our knowledge, did not complain. Therefore, until they complain we are faced with the word of honourable gentlemen here who say that they did not interfere nor in any way try to influence judgments.

In the third case, which had to do with my then first secretary, the judge in question, Justice Mackay, is the one who is stating that there was an attempt to influence. I have the word of the minister that he in no way did that, that the limit of his talk with Justice Mackay was to ask when the judgment would be rendered. I have looked into the circumstances under which this was requested. I find it a perfectly legitimate intervention in those circumstances.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: I say this only after some thought, Mr. Speaker, because I realize that it does not appear prima facie good when somebody talks to a judge. However, the House knows the circumstances of this. We had a friendly government saying that there might be riots as a result of a sentence. They wanted to know when the sentence would come down so that they could prepare to meet such riots, if they happened. I think it is perfectly justifiable in such circumstances to elicit that information.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: Here again, I repeat what I said to the House yesterday. It is possible that the Chief Justice entrusted with the administration of those courts would have