

Tributes to Mr. Stanfield

an well. We also hope that down the road he will spend more time in the presence of bananas than of footballs.

[Translation]

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I have great pleasure in joining the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the NDP Leader (Mr. Broadbent) to express good wishes, thanks and congratulations to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) who will resign as Leader of the Opposition this coming weekend.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that, independently from political ideologies, the House of Commons, every member and the whole population have highly appreciated Mr. Stanfield's qualities as a truly great Canadian. We have noted during these seven or eight years that the Leader of the Opposition has beyond any doubt demonstrated his interest for the people and for national unity, being the representative of all Canadian regions and not only one area to the detriment of the others. He really has the stature of a great national statesman—international, I might even say—since he often looked into matters concerning Canada in its relations with other nations. Mr. Stanfield is an honest man who has stirred up the admiration and respect of the people, though it has not necessarily been reflected at election time. But, at any rate, he has deserved the admiration of the population for his sense of responsibility. He has always been at his post and he has commanded respect from the population and hon. members.

We wish happy days to the Leader of the Opposition and his family. Most of all, we wish him good health and much happiness in the years to come, which we hope will be most numerous. Good luck to the Leader of the Opposition!

[English]

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to the right hon. gentleman and to the leaders of the other parties for the tributes they have paid in initiating this interesting point of order which I am putting into my rule book for future reference. Before the right hon. gentleman spoke, I had considered asking a question. I consulted the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) and found a precedent going back to 632 B.C. under the laws of Justinian.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

● (1430)

Mr. Baldwin: The hon. gentleman assures me he was not in the House then, but he is well aware of the precedent.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Baldwin: I want to say to my hon. friend, the Leader of the Opposition with whom I have had the pleasure of sharing this seat, that he came into this House on a great wave of support from ski-jumpers. I understand, Mr. Speaker, that after watching the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) he will now take up the art of wrestling as a very useful and effective means of dealing with the problems of the country.

Seriously, sir, this has been quite a time. A lot of people think of my hon. friend sitting here as Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) while I have been sitting here as House leader, but really it has been an exercise which

[Mr. Broadbent.]

we call "the education of Pierre." I may say to the right hon. gentleman that we now have the examination papers. We are marking them, and from time to time we will let him know exactly what his mark is.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baldwin: Let me say through you, sir, to members of the House that it has been a great privilege for me to occupy this seat, and a great privilege for me to have been a member of this party which has had the pleasure of working under the leadership and guidance of my hon. friend.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baldwin: I say this only in conclusion: he is leaving this party, as an opposition party it is true, but an opposition party which under the democratic system that prevails in this country is a necessary and essential part of the function of a democracy and a parliamentary structure. It has been honed to an edge. We have had some vigorous arguments from time to time, as people are aware, but it is a united, effective and hard working party, willing and able at the appropriate time to walk across the floor to a more suitable position. That is the legacy which my hon. friend has left to this party and to this parliament.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): After all that, Mr. Speaker, a less loquacious man than myself would be speechless.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: Before this afternoon and these extraordinary remarks, I had sensed that the country might never be quite the same again, but I did not fully realize the extent of the national disaster.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanfield: It may be, sir, that in view of this, before taking this decision I ought to have consulted my friend, the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and other party leaders in this House, or at least the chief government whip who I can see is obviously devastated.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Stanfield: I wish to thank members on all sides of the House for their friendship to me while I have been Leader of the Opposition.

[Translation]

Our debates have sometimes been quite animated, but never acrid. I have the very deep feeling that we are united by a sense of mutual respect which makes the grandeur of this House.

I take this opportunity to express my warm thanks to the staff of the French *Hansard*. They have had to be very patient with me.

[English]

Mr. Speaker, I feel I should thank you particularly for your courtesy to me and your understanding of my role