

The Address—Mr. Fleming

Mr. Cruickshank: I rise on a question of privilege. I do so because the last speaker is on my own side of the house, and I prefer to do so now rather than when a speaker from the other side of the house has concluded a speech. We have talked about amendment of the rules. I should like to suggest that only the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) and the leader of the opposition (Mr. Drew) be allowed to exceed forty minutes. If you are going to permit one member to do it, then every one of us should have the same privilege. I say that with no disrespect to the previous speaker, who is a member on my own side of the house. If a member cannot say what he has to say in forty minutes he should write it out, hand it to the press and stay in his own riding. I respectfully suggest that the forty-minute rule be enforced, with the exception of the Prime Minister and the leader of the opposition.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I may say it is the custom of the Speaker to remind the house when a member has spoken forty minutes, but if the house gives unanimous consent then the member continues, and the Speaker can do nothing about that.

Mr. Donald M. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Speaker, I am sure it is gratifying to every true lover of democracy to see on the part of the Canadian public a quickened interest in what is going on in this parliament. There are many reasons one can think of for that fact. Perhaps rumours of an election have assisted. In any event, the fact that we have in the house a new Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) and a new leader of the opposition (Mr. Drew) undoubtedly has been a major factor in attracting increased interest to what is transpiring in this house. I would say to the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) that when he was elected to the leadership of the Liberal party, and then when he assumed the responsibilities of Prime Minister of Canada, it was a great pleasure to extend very hearty congratulations to him; and I repeat those congratulations today. We have had many differences; we may have more today before I conclude my remarks, but the warmth of my congratulations is not in the least abated.

I should like to say a word, too, concerning the man who leads the Progressive Conservative party, the new leader of the opposition in this chamber (Mr. Drew). I have had the good fortune to know him personally for something like twenty-four years now; and I know him, as this house increasingly will come to know and appreciate him, as a man of high courage, a man who presently, after the next election, will give the whole Canadian people dynamic, progressive and vigorous leadership. His record as premier of the province of Ontario is such that it will be

[Mr. Bradette.]

the ambition of premiers of that province in generations to come to seek in some degree to emulate it. He was at all times progressive, and he gave that province such administration as will leave it forever in his debt. This party under the present leader of the opposition presents to the people of Canada an invincible unity, and that unity will make itself felt not only in this chamber during the present session, but, after the election that is to come, throughout this dominion when he takes his position as Prime Minister.

I suppose it is only to be expected that some members of the house should seek to train their cap pistols on big targets. I suppose some, like the hon. member for St. James (Mr. Beaudry), because their armoury may not be quite as heavy as they would wish, will seek to make up what may be lacking in their aim by choosing large targets. But I want to say that remarks such as those which fell from the lips of the hon. member for St. James today and on Tuesday do not hurt my leader or reflect upon him. By remarks of that kind the hon. member only hurts and reflects upon himself.

It was appropriate that the leader of the opposition, in his speech opening this debate, should have concentrated most of his remarks on the subject of dominion-provincial relations, because those who have sat in this house since 1945 will not forget how frequently members opposite have sought to regale the house with accusations directed at the distinguished man who is now leader of the opposition. It was refreshing to see that leader literally take the government by the scruff of the neck and give a complete answer to those who have been misrepresenting the record in the years that have intervened since the government sabotaged the last dominion-provincial conference.

Did it not strike members of the house as passing strange that when the Prime Minister followed the leader of the opposition last Friday evening he completely avoided the subject of dominion-provincial relations? As a matter of fact he sought with almost indecent haste to align himself on the side of the angels. Here is what he said, as we find it at page 60 of *Hansard*:

Before doing that, however, I want to say to the leader of the opposition that there are many of the things he said in his speech concerning dominion-provincial relations, and concerning the constitution of Canada, and its principles, with which I am in entire agreement.

Some hon. Members: Why not?

Mr. Fleming: Quite so; at last we have a little wisdom flowing from lips opposite. Why not? There is no reason why hon. members opposite should not have agreed with every word the leader of the opposition said in