

*The Address—Mr. Baldwin*

**Mr. Sharp:** Since I am not a constitutional authority like my hon. friend, I should like to take that question as notice.

**SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**CONTINUATION OF DEBATE ON  
ADDRESS IN REPLY

The house resumed, from Friday, January 21, consideration of the motion of Mr. Goyer for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his speech at the opening of the session, and the amendment thereto of Mr. Diefenbaker.

**Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River):** Mr. Speaker, may I first extend to those hon. members who moved and seconded the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne my very sincere congratulations on the excellent speeches and contributions they have made to this house. Not only the delivery but the content and material were such as to indicate that these two members will prove to be very valuable and useful members in this chamber.

It is significant at this time to note that those two hon. members are two of 60 new members who are now engaged in finding their places and becoming aware of the many facets of parliamentary life which make it interesting and perplexing. I welcome all those other new members, but I might say that I think if the seating arrangement was such that more of them were on this side of the house, this party and this country would be better served and these members would have a far greater opportunity to make a contribution. However, the people of this country have made the decision.

I should like to extend to you, sir, my sincere congratulations on your elevation to the high position you now occupy. Through you I should also like to offer my congratulations to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of Committees.

Having had the privilege of being associated with you, Mr. Speaker, during the proceedings and deliberations of the committee on procedure studying changes in the rules, I have every confidence that you will discharge your responsibilities in a way most fitting to your high office. I am particularly sure of this because, as a result of the adoption of these rules for one year, this house has seen fit to entrust to the occupant of the Chair the right and duty of making decisions which are not subject to appeal. With the adoption of this rule it is my belief that a greater measure of

[Mr. Orlikow.]

independence should be attached to the position of Speaker and Deputy Speaker. In any event I am sure and have confidence that you will discharge your responsibilities and exercise discretion carefully and justly.

This parliament has inherited some of the leftovers of the last parliament, one of which I was pleased to note was disposed of satisfactorily by this house on Friday; I refer to the temporary arrangements adopted in regard to the application of the new rules for the balance of this session. I cannot agree with all the changes introduced by the government and the committee on procedure, but I feel sure we will have a reasonable opportunity during the balance of this session to understand and decide whether some of these changes are satisfactory and should be adopted on a permanent basis, or whether some of them are unsatisfactory and should be discarded.

Another of the problems inherited by this house relates to the government which finds itself in a minority position in this house. During the last two days, Thursday and Friday of last week, we had an opportunity of debating the question now before the house and of hearing the views of hon. members regarding this minority position. We have had the opportunity of hearing views expressed by the Prime Minister and other leaders in this house.

As an example, Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask what the position will be if and when the opposition in exercising its rights and duties sees fit to propose an amendment in substance to government proposals, bills and spending programs. As I understood the Prime Minister, after listening to him on Friday, he indicated that he intends to take the narrow and orthodox view that an amendment in substance to the government's position when accepted by the house could be followed only by the resignation of the government and dissolution. Other hon. members, including the right hon. Leader of the Opposition have taken a different view.

In this regard the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre delved into the records of the house in search of precedents and customs followed by this house. I suggest there are practices and usages we could adopt, if we saw fit, which would alleviate the necessity of a government sustaining a defeat to resign and call an election.

It is true, Mr. Speaker, that practices, customs, usages and precedents are useful in a democratic parliamentary system. While it is