

*Right Hon. Member for Prince Albert*

Opposition will attempt to co-operate with me in achieving that objective.

**Mr. Stanfield:** I am willing.

**Mr. MacEachen:** Mr. Speaker, may I say that the applause that came from this side when the Leader of the Opposition expressed his sentiments with respect to the right hon. member for Prince Albert is eloquent testimony to the esteem in which he is held on this side of the House.

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

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) and others who have spoken for their all too generous words. Coming from an oil province, I always like to make an effort to pour oil on anything of a controversial nature, and I will continue to do so in the hope that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) in his discussions with the premiers this week will be able to make that oil available to all of Canada.

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

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Thirty-four years is a long while. Not a day passes in this institution that I do not learn something concerning the greatness of parliament. It is hard to express oneself under these circumstances because there is nothing a member can desire more than to be regarded by all, without regard to party, as one dedicated to the House of Commons.

Mention was made by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) of another John Turner. I recall very well that in those days Shakespeare and the classics were regularly drawn upon by members as they spoke. One evening there was a great argument about what Shakespeare had said and had not said, and that John Turner from Manitoba arose and said: "I really have never made very much of a study of Shakespeare, except one line—to beer or not to beer, that is the question".

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

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** That evening he fully lived up to his remark about the alleged words of what he called "Mr. Shakespeare".

The older I become the more I have an affection for this institution and for its membership. We as Canadians can be proud of the fact, not unctuous in our declaration, that this country has not seen anything like what has happened under another system of government in a country for which we have so much regard.

The hon. member who spoke for the Social Credit Party I must say began right in 1957. At my age one does not look ahead; one lives from day to day.

I conclude my expression of deep appreciation to the members of this House not with a warning but simply with the illustration that others have served far longer. Sir Wilfrid Laurier served for 47 years and Sir John A. Macdonald for 48 years, which of course included a long period in the parliament of Upper and Lower Canada. Therein I see an objective.

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

[Mr. MacEachen.]

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** To all of you from the bottom of my heart I express my deepest appreciation. I thank the government House leader for his all too kind words. Both of us have been here a long while, and my expectation is that each of us will endeavour to continue.

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

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

### MISCELLANEOUS PRIVATE BILLS AND STANDING ORDERS

First report, in both official languages, of Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Private Bills and Standing Orders—Mr. Duquet.

[Editor's Note: For text of above report, see today's Votes and Proceedings.]

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[English]

### VETERANS LAND ACT

#### ANNOUNCEMENT OF EXTENSION OF DEADLINE FOR EXPIRY TO MARCH 31, 1975

**Hon. Daniel J. MacDonald (Minister of Veterans Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to make a statement with regard to the Veterans Land Act. Hon. members are doubtless aware that in its present form the act provides that the director may not accept any application for a new establishment after March 31, 1974. This provision was inserted in the act by parliament nine years ago.

For many months I have been giving consideration to the question—

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

**Mr. MacDonald (Cardigan):**—whether the act ought to be further extended. On March 12, I undertook to review the matter again. I have done so, and I now wish to announce that the government will introduce a measure to extend the operation of the act for one year to March 31, 1975, to enable any qualified veterans who may have been caught by the present deadline to make their applications.

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

**Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe):** Mr. Speaker, although I thank the minister for making this statement I must say I certainly cannot commend or congratulate him on the very narrow concession he has made to the veterans. It just indicates that there is a complete lack of compassion on the part of the government—

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

**An hon. Member:** All they are doing is playing politics.