

House of Commons

deserve it or, again, that you are exercising your discretion, as you, in the chair, have every right to do.

(Translation):

Mr. Chevrier: I should not want to forgo the custom of saying a few words about the deputy speaker and chairman of the committees of the house (Mr. Flynn). Unfortunately, he is not here at the moment since he is representing Canada on a mission abroad, according to what I have read in the newspapers.

I wish to thank him for the manner in which he has fulfilled his duties. I am sure he has done as well as he could.

(Text):

Now I should like to say a special word about the chairman of our committee of the whole house. He is not only a new chairman but also a new member. He has had to take over from his predecessor at short notice. In my opinion, a chairman of the committee must have three prerequisite qualities. The first is a knowledge of the rules, the next is good judgment, and the third is a lot of patience. The hon. member who presides now over the committee of the whole possesses those three qualifications. In my opinion he has put into effect not so much the letter of the rules as their spirit and that is, I think, what was intended by those who enacted the rules in the first place.

There are many others in the house to whom I should like to say a word of thanks—to the Clerk and those who sit round him at the table and who perform services for us all; to our *Hansard* reporters, both in English and in French, who are so accurate and painstaking and who spend a great length of time after the house adjourns preparing transcripts of our speeches. I should like to express our thanks to the translators. This is a new branch of our house. A translator must be extremely efficient. He must have a general knowledge of so many subjects, and more, particularly, of the subjects which are under discussion here. I want to thank them particularly. I wish also to express our thanks to the secretaries and the stenographers of the house, to the protective staff and to the clerks of the committees whom we always seem to omit, and to all others. They perform a commendable task. Committees sit so often now, and the clerks perform most valuable duties. I should like to thank them on behalf of the opposition. Last, but not least, I should like to express our thanks to those page boys who serve us with such devotion, who are so well groomed and well drilled, thanks to those associated with you, Mr. Speaker. We shall miss them in the days that lie ahead.

[Mr. Chevrier.]

I think I should conclude by thanking all the members of the house for not having interrupted me and so many others here more often than they did and for their many contributions to the discussions which took place as well as to the general conduct and administration of the House of Commons. To all those hon. members who are here I say "thank you" and look forward to seeing you again in the not too distant future.

Mr. Erhart Regier (Burnaby-Coquitlam): On behalf of the members of this group I want to endorse all the sentiments which have been so ably expressed by the spokesman of the official opposition. I especially wish to reiterate the kind words he had to say about the leader of the house. We have at all times experienced his willingness to consult in a manner, I may say, we have not always experienced in the past.

To you, Mr. Speaker, we want to say that we have never noticed you leaning either to the left or to the right. You have always maintained an impartial position, often in difficult situations which we have imposed upon you.

I wish to pay the compliments of this group to the many employees of the house, not only to the clerks but even to our office assistants, stenographers, messengers, page boys and all the rest. I am sure all members of this house regret the necessity at this time of having to appoint a new chairman of the committee of the whole. I am sure that all of us wish the former chairman a speedy recovery and return to this house.

The members of our group hope that all hon. members, as they go home for a month or more of fence mending, will have a very interesting experience.

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, may I thank hon. members of the opposition who have referred so kindly to me and, I am sure, to the great surprise of my colleagues on this side of the house. What the hon. member for Laurier said is very accurate and should be borne in mind. During the last three weeks the house has operated more efficiently than it did in earlier parts of the session. I am quite prepared to agree with him that the early imposition of lengthy hours and Saturday sittings is a mistake and perhaps another year we will not have to do that.

I am constantly surprised how well we do manage in this house year after year and I am impressed by the friendly spirit that prevails despite spirited debate which is of importance in a democratic parliament. I for one always liked spirited debate in the House