

Royal Assent

Finance with regard to the present occupants of those positions—if they are still the present occupants—those occupants who in a very few minutes will cease to adorn those positions. I express our appreciation of them and of those who preceded them. In doing so I include the junior member of the government who, despite whatever differences we had with him, we always found occupied the chair with dignity and decorum.

Mr. Herridge: Mr. Speaker, I am glad that my last official act as the parliamentary leader of this famous group for this session of parliament is a delightful and pleasant one—to join with the Minister of Finance and the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate in expressing our sincere appreciation of your services as Speaker during this parliament.

It has been true that your understanding of human beings, your understanding of the mood of the house, your sense of humour and your spirit of fair play have caused you to be so loved by us and has caused us to have such an appreciation of your period of office. It is for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, that during recent months there has been a growing interest in the house, and in the party for which I have the honour to speak this afternoon, in the proposal that we should have a permanent speaker.

We in this group trust that finally we shall adopt the practice which has been found so satisfactory in Great Britain, namely the appointment of a permanent speaker and that, because he is the permanent speaker, he will receive that due consideration in the difficult periods that come occasionally when the people of a country have to make their decision as to the government they wish to have.

Before concluding I must also express our appreciation of the kindness and hospitality extended to hon. members of the house by your good wife. She is one of the most charming ladies one could imagine.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Herridge: Anyone who has attended one of her dinners cannot but realize she knows what a good table is and how to make certain that all present enjoy themselves in the friendliest of atmospheres.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of this group, and I might say we all expect to be back after the next election, we trust you will have an enjoyable holiday and will return refreshed to the coming parliament and that we will find, should that parliament

decide early in its proceedings to make provision for the office of a permanent speaker, you will grace it.

Mr. Speaker: I trust hon. members will permit me one word more. In view of the kind and gracious things that have been said I should like to acknowledge, first on behalf of my associates in the chair and in committee, the words of appreciation which have so properly been spoken about them. Then I should like to acknowledge the appreciation expressed for the officers at the table, the Clerk of the House, the Assistant Clerk, the Sergeant-at-Arms and others who have served the house so well and upon whom we all depend so greatly. For them I am sure I express their gratitude that their services, so often ignored, have been properly acknowledged in these closing hours. Likewise for my wife I could not be more appreciative of the words which have been said about her.

For myself, of course, I would like to say a great deal more than would be acceptable. May I put it simply—that these years in the 24th and 23rd parliaments have been years of great happiness and interest. They have been years of happiness because of the co-operation which the house, on all sides, has extended unflinchingly to me, both when I was right and when I was not so right. So I say, not without some feeling, that I am grateful for everything that has been said in this final hour. What I should say to you I am not quite sure as you go out to the experience we shall all share in common. Perhaps the best I can do would be to renew the invitation to join me across the hall, and wish you all many happy returns.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, before the formal adjournment of the house is asked for I should like once more to ask hon. gentlemen in the New Democratic party whether they would be prepared to continue this session until the conclusion of that portion of business which was being considered at the time we resorted to the other place. I make that appeal; I shall do no more. If there is no hope of that appeal receiving the consideration which I would have expected it would receive, then of course there is nothing more to do than for the house leader to move the adjournment of the house. I think tomorrow may be the date when His Excellency will receive the advice and the dissolution already indicated will become effective.

Mr. Churchill: Mr. Speaker, I would move the adjournment of the house until April 26.