

Tributes to Mr. Léon-J. Raymond

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, the members of this party desire to associate themselves most enthusiastically with the motion before the house paying tribute to the distinguished service which has been rendered to this House of Commons by Mr. Raymond. In his public capacity he has served this House of Commons exceedingly well. It is true that we follow the procedures of Westminster, but our procedures and practices have to be adapted from time to time to meet our particular needs. This requires the genius of understanding and interpretation, and this the Clerk of the House of Commons, Mr. Raymond, has displayed to a remarkable degree. He has discharged his duties in a manner that is a credit to this house. He has maintained the high standard and great traditions of the office he has occupied.

However, I should like to add a further word and that is to speak of his personal contribution to all of us who have had the privilege of sitting in this house. His unflinching kindness, his innate courtesy have made him the friend of every member of this house. This has been particularly true of new members, who felt that they could go to him at any time and get the benefit of his advice and encouragement. I think there is probably no topic that has come before this house in many a day on which there has been such complete unanimity as that of paying tribute to a very fine Clerk of the House of Commons, a very generous and kindly gentleman.

[Translation]

Mr. C.-A. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, for the French-Canadian group it is my privilege to represent in the house, it will be readily understood what joy it is for us to support the motion of the Acting Prime Minister (Mr. Martin) to confer the title of honorary officer of this house to such a man as Mr. Raymond who has given 18 years of his life as Clerk of the House of Commons.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that for us, a third party, particularly a new party in the house, we owe a personal debt of gratitude to Mr. Raymond for his warm and so understanding reception after our first election.

Mr. Raymond has always been also the first man for the new member to meet and from him we get our first greeting. For the second year member, Mr. Raymond has shown himself to be a valuable adviser, just as he was through the years for any member who sat in this house. Mr. Raymond has always been there to give us the necessary encouragement to fulfil our task.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

We feel Mr. Raymond has been a model of simplicity and dignity in the pursuance of his duties. His undisputed competence, due to his thorough knowledge of the two languages, makes Mr. Raymond the perfect model of the Canadian civil servant. Through his frankness and his charitable disposition, and particularly through his fairness, he has earned the confidence of all in this house.

For us and for those who come after us, I feel that Mr. Raymond will be an example to follow, and we wish him long and happy days. Rest assured, Mr. Raymond, that we will always be happy to meet you and to shake your hand.

• (11:20 a.m.)

[English]

Mr. A. B. Patterson (Fraser Valley): Mr. Speaker, we wish on this occasion to join in expressing to Mr. Raymond our deep appreciation for the services he has rendered and to express our best wishes to him on this occasion when he is about to enter retirement.

Much has been said about the spirit of helpfulness and courtesy which has marked Mr. Raymond's attitude to the members of the House of Commons throughout the past years. Since coming to this house for the first time in 1953 I can certainly appreciate those sentiments because in my personal contacts with Mr. Raymond he has at all times evidenced a spirit of helpfulness and courtesy that made it easier to become acquainted with the house, its procedures and our responsibilities here.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pleasure that we in the Social Credit party support the resolution designating Mr. Raymond as an honorary officer of the House of Commons, with the attendant privileges that this resolution confers.

Hon. A. J. MacEachen (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I should like to join in this formal parliamentary tribute to the retiring Clerk of the House of Commons. I should like to do this as government house leader, but more particularly for personal reasons. It is appropriate that we should acknowledge in this way the silent service of one whose counsel has played so important a part in the moulding of the practices and procedures of this house.

I know, as one who like most of us came to this house in awesome ignorance of its rules and practices, that I am grateful to Mr. Raymond for his great patience, his wise counsel and his friendly guidance along the