

Opposition House Leader

will hear your appeal right now". That is the position we are in with Your Honour.

I have enjoyed the arguments; and Your Honour has, of course, had the advice of his trusted officers at the table. I think we are making progress in changing the jurisprudence of this House. I have enjoyed every bit of it and I look forward to staying for a considerable period even though, I might say, Mr. Speaker, we may have some very important changes in where we sit in this House.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps, contrary to practice and tradition, the Chair might be allowed to add one brief word to what has already been said. This would give me an opportunity to express my personal admiration for the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) and the way in which he has discharged his responsibilities as House leader for Her Majesty's official opposition.

It is well known, and is part of the tradition of the House of Commons, that when serious problems arise or there is difficulty, the Chair should seek the advice of the senior members of the House. Certainly this has been my policy and a number of senior members of the various parties have been consulted from time to time. I see a number of them in the House at the moment. This includes, I might say, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), and obviously it includes the hon. member for Peace River. At all times the hon. member for Peace River has been helpful, kind and generous in the advice he has given me personally, and I have always appreciated it.

In the discharge of his duties, the hon. member has exemplified what I think is best in our Canadian parliamentary tradition. In his difficult role he has been strong and aggressive, as he is entitled to be and ought to be—but this has always been marked by the virtues which are those of a temperate and intelligent man, one who has been in all circumstances a highly civilized person. I think this is a virtue which is still important in this institution, and in my view the hon. member for Peace River has exemplified these virtues in past years.

This is not an obituary in any way, as the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre said. Having occupied the high office he has in recent years, the hon. member for Peace River may soon expect to go higher. The only question is, how high will he be going? I hope that in the next weeks or months that decision will not be up to the Chair, unless it gives me an opportunity to replace the position which he held before.

I am sure we are all of one mind and one heart at the present time and congratulate the hon. member for Peace River. We wish him happiness and success in the continuing discharge of his duties, in the service of his party in the House of Commons, that of his constituents and of the people of Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to say a word on this matter although it is difficult for me to speak about the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) because since I came to this House he has been such a close colleague and associate. I have leaned upon him so many times.

As you say, Sir, this is not an obituary. The hon. member will continue in the House and it will merely be a matter of changing his responsibilities somewhat. It is a very arduous task, a very demanding task to be the House leader of a party in this House. To be House leader of the official opposition is very exacting in terms of trying to anticipate what the government might be doing. I do not say that in any derogatory way that reflects upon this particular government, but in the nature of things the opposition does have to react in the sense that the government is in charge of the program of the House. The hon. member for Peace River has combined a very great knowledge of procedure and the rules with what I believe to be exquisite judgment and a judicious balance of aggressiveness, along with knowing just how far to pursue a point.

I recall that after the past election a member of this House wondered whether the House would come apart as a result of the balance of parties. Thinking back to bygone days when things were pretty rough here, and thinking they might be even rougher, the hon. member raised the point with me. But he was not concerned about its being a lively House; he was concerned about its disintegrating. I want to close by saying, Mr. Speaker, that apart from your own skill and judgment, one of the reasons the House has not come apart has been the parliamentary judgment and attitude of the House leader of this party. Without in any way neglecting his duties to his own party or his position in the opposition, the hon. member has never failed to remember his duty to the House of Commons.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, I think there might be agreement to call it five o'clock.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: There is a suggestion that we adjourn. Perhaps before we do, I might remind hon. members that, according to long-established practice and tradition, the Speaker will be in his chambers for a short while for tea and crumpets.

● (1550)

[*Translation*]

This applies to some hon. members and others will be "dipped".

[*English*]

Pursuant to special order made earlier this day, this House stands adjourned until Monday, October 15, 1973, at two o'clock.

At 3.53 p.m. the House adjourned pursuant to special order made this day.