

Mr. Speaker: During the four years I have had the honour to serve as the Speaker, I can faithfully relate to hon. members that the dedication of the Colonel has been one which has gone far beyond the normal hours of work of anyone occupying any kind of post around these premises. He is here early in the morning and stays late at night. He is here on weekends, and he is always here when special events are on. He has served this House with such great devotion and dedication that I know all hon. members will want to join with me at this moment in saying to him, and to his good wife, that the rest and retirement to which he now proceeds are richly deserved, and all of the work he has done will make him one who will be fondly recalled and remembered by all hon. members of this House.

He is a distinguished Canadian, a distinguished soldier and a holder of the Victoria Cross before coming to this House. In this House he has served with the same kind of distinction with which he served his country prior to becoming the Sergeant-at-Arms, and I know all of us wish him a happy retirement and rest. Bon voyage; a job well done; and congratulations, Colonel, on behalf of all of us.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (1117)

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, your words have so well expressed our feelings this morning that it might seem unnecessary to add a single additional comment. However, this is one of the rare occasions in the House of Commons when the House can be in total agreement, even in the absence of all-party consultation. That total agreement, of course, is one brought about by our desire to express gratitude and good wishes to Lt. Colonel Currie.

I believe that words on this occasion can hardly do justice to the contribution that Colonel Currie has made to our country and to the House of Commons. Your Honour has already referred to his gallantry in time of war when he was awarded the Victoria Cross, held by very few persons. Indeed, in that select company Lt. Colonel Currie would be regarded as one of the most distinguished. He has carried into the House of Commons during his years of service that same dedication to duty and patience which was his hallmark during his service career.

I am sure that in all the years he has served us we have tried his patience and his endurance, but despite all these provocations he has maintained his fairness, his authority and his good humour. Accordingly, it is easy for me to express to him our admiration and respect on behalf of all those on this side of the House, and to add our good wishes to Mrs. Currie and to himself for many future years of happiness.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to be associated with my colleague, the government House leader, in this tribute to Lt. Colonel Currie today, not

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only as House leader for Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition but in a very personal way. I hope that Lt. Colonel Currie has not forgotten that when he first came to Ottawa in 1960, he came to a very young lawyer, who has the floor of the House of Commons today, for advice on the purchase of his first house. It was on that occasion that I first met Lt. Colonel Currie. I have always admired his choice and judgment ever since.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): He helped me, sir, when I moved into this House in 1972. I appreciated his kindness then, and his kindness to me and to all of my colleagues ever since.

In the citation recommending Lt. Colonel Currie's Victoria Cross, these words appear about him; that he showed "gallant conduct and contempt for danger." I can think of no greater attributes for a Sergeant-at-Arms in this House of Commons.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): More than that, sir, it says that he "set a magnificent example to all ranks under his command". He has set an example to those who serve under him, to those of us who have had the privilege and honour of serving with him, of devotion to duty and adherence to principles. All of us in this House of Commons are sad to see him go.

● (1122)

I should like to join with my friend, the hon. government House leader, in paying a special tribute to Mrs. Currie. It was a happy occasion for members of parliament, during the course of their duties and their sojourn in this building, to meet Mrs. Currie, who is a kind, affable, warm and generous woman, second to none. I pay a very special tribute to her.

On behalf of my leader and my colleagues in the House of Commons, I hope the years of retirement for Lt. Colonel Currie are long and fruitful, that he enjoys the good health and the time to do the things which a very busy and distinguished career heretofore made impossible. He goes to the fruits of his retirement with our blessings and our thanks.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to join with Your Honour, and with the two House leaders who have spoken already, in this moment of tribute to our friend, Lt. Colonel David Currie. I do so on behalf of my leader and all members of the New Democratic Party.

I do so, as well, in a very personal way because of the privilege I have had these many years of being associated with him. In that connection, may I underline what has been said already about the fairness and the impartiality of his administration, which indeed carried with it a great many responsibilities. Certainly, Lt. Colonel Currie has performed the visible aspects of his office with distinction. He has been a part of this