

*The Address*

Should it become weaker because of our continual friction—which is mostly created, I may say, by politicians and not the common worker, not the individual who is trying to make a living in this country, not one who is contributing to society, not people like the truck drivers who were here last week, or the tobacco farmers who found themselves in trouble in this country, or the steel workers who are meeting in Ottawa right now, trying to find a way to solve some of their dilemma, their loss of jobs—we must put aside some of our frictional differences that lead us to say: “It is your fault”, “It is my fault”, or “It is the government’s fault” from Mr. Trudeau years ago or Mr. Pearson or Mr. Diefenbaker. It is always somebody’s fault.

In my view, today is the day we must sit down as parliamentarians and find out what unites us and work toward that end. That way, this House of Parliament will stay with its 290—some members and, in fact, grow.

All this confrontation must come to an end. I see my colleague from Winnipeg, Manitoba, a very distinguished member of Parliament who has sat on a committee with me. I believe some of the committee work in the past has shown that a lot of great work can be done in non-partisan way for the betterment of this country.

I had the opportunity to sit on the Indian affairs committee when I was first elected. I see another colleague of mine, a very distinguished member from northern Ontario. We sat and worked out a lot of great new ideas which were worked into Bill C-31. It is probably not a perfect bill, but I can recall that one, and so does my colleague.

The whole idea is to get away from the controversy, and I think all members should sit down and examine how we can avoid that. Sure, I like heated debates. The number of hours in this House we spent talking about points of privilege, points of order, and differences of opinion that took up the Chair’s time to re-evaluate and reassess—and I see some people nodding their heads—when we could have entertained honest and fair debate about how your point of view or mine may differ, and the facts to back it up.

That kind of good, healthy debate is what we should have, as opposed to saying: “You know what he said about me last week, or in the committee, or so on, and you know that report in the paper”. This has to be the

goal of this session of Parliament. I believe it is very crucial. We should see a tone in Question Period that is less confrontational. Surely, with an attitude like that, within 16 months or so we could find a true solution to Canada’s ills and hopefully by then the recession will be long over and the economy will be booming again.

I support an effort by all members to try and work in a more co-operative way. I would like to present my idea as to what I think the Speaker ought to do when there is a bad practice going on. He should tell those two individuals to go meet out behind the curtains so we can get on with the business of the House, which is debate, debate and debate, good debate, the kind that we see sometimes done by our American colleagues. I sometimes admire them. They seem to have an idea of their land so well in hand that they go after the problems and debate them out there.

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank my colleague from the government for the comments he has made, particularly a special thank you for his positive comments about my work in Parliament as a member.

I know that when he pleads for some sort of non-partisanship on the major issues of the day that he is sincere.

I, too, want to do exactly that. When we are talking about the country, when we are talking about Canada and what it has been, what it is and what it can be, surely we need to work together. When we talk about the economic development of this nation, of all regions, and about bringing a greater sense of justice to the workers of this great country, we need to work more co-operatively.

However, there is a problem. I recall just a few days ago when I, in fact, had explained to a colleague from the other opposition party what my leader’s position was on the Constitution. I had explained it to him personally because I wanted to make sure that he did not misunderstand. It was with respect to what we were proposing to do. My leader had indicated what his preferred position would be and I had hoped that it would take place without any partisanship. I explained it to my colleague, but he got up and took advantage of the situation by pretending and, in fact, indicating quite clearly that he had not heard it before.