

New Member

Mr. Stanfield: I hope I am not out of place, Mr. Speaker, in suggesting to the hon. member, who is taking his seat today, that his colleague the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) has conducted himself eloquently and effectively as the acting parliamentary leader of his party. I hope this is not the kiss of death for the coming days. The hon. member for York South was so effective that the other day he was accused of demagoguery by the Prime Minister. I interpret that as being complimentary.

These are very strenuous days for parliament and the country. We all know the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands will continue to make a very informed and constructive contribution to parliament and the country. It is a great pleasure indeed for me personally and on behalf of my colleagues to welcome him back to this house.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gilbert Rondeau (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, we in this corner of the house congratulate the new member and leader of the New Democratic party on his election; we notice that though he has not been too fortunate in general elections, he seems to have become an expert in by-elections.

Mr. Speaker, we will now have the leader of the New Democratic party (Mr. Douglas) on our right, and even though we do not always endorse his ideas because they lean to the left, we nevertheless appreciate his many qualities as a parliamentarian. I have had the opportunity of knowing him personally in 1962. During all the debates, he was a credit to the House of Commons, by putting forward the ideas of his party which he represented very well.

I take the opportunity to commend those who, during his absence, assumed the leadership of the New Democratic party in parliamentary matters. Even though their leader was not here, they were able to hold out and set forth the ideas which prompted their constituents to elect them to the House of Commons.

We therefore join our verbal flowers to the natural flowers which have been placed on the hon. member's desk; we assure him of our respect and wish him good luck for the future.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

[*English*]

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, as the devil said when [Mr. Stanfield.]

he was sworn in as a member of the cabinet, "It's nice to be home."

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): I want, sir, through you to express my very sincere appreciation of the warm welcome which has been extended to me by members in all parts of the house, and particularly to say how deeply touched I am by the fine tributes which have been paid by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), and the hon. member for Shefford (Mr. Rondeau), speaking on behalf of the Ralliement du Creditiste. I have been associated with politicians so long that I do not take too seriously what they say in their moments of euphoria; nevertheless I know from long experience and from having worked with members in all parties in this house that their tributes are sincere, and their welcome is a genuine one.

I am very happy to be able to resume my place in the house. As the Prime Minister has said, I have had many months away from the house in which to learn many things. I would even recommend it to some members of the house and of the government. I think that visiting logging camps, sawmills and pulp-mills, fishermen on their boats, businessmen and consumer groups is a very valuable experience for one who has been a long time in public life. I am deeply indebted to the house for its kindness, and to the people of Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands for the vote of confidence they gave to me and to my colleagues in sending me here.

I would like to express my appreciation to the members of the New Democratic party who sit in this house for the fine job they have done during my absence. I am glad the Prime Minister has noted the degree of unity which obtains. I have had no difficulty with some of them wanting to get out of NATO, and some wanting to stay in NATO.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): They have managed to develop a degree of unity which I have found most comforting.

It was a great experience, coming back last night; when I got off the plane some of my colleagues and supporters met me and presented me with a book called, "The Sayings of Chairman Diefenbaker." When I got into our apartment I found sitting on the table, a book my wife had been reading, one by the Prime