

The Address—Mr. Broadbent

Therefore I have to indicate that the decision is no longer mine. The decision was that of the House, and it was clearly taken yesterday. Therefore while I have every intention—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order. While I have every intention of recognizing—

[*Translation*]

—the hon. member for Beauce maybe tomorrow, it is now, I think, the turn of a government member since the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Trudeau) spoke first, then the Prime Minister (Mr. Clark) and finally the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Broadbent), an opposition member. A government member will now have the floor. That is why I recognized the hon. member for South Shore (Mr. Crouse).

Mr. Roy (Beauce): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to raise a question of privilege since I am the one concerned.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Beauce on a point of order.

Mr. Roy (Beauce): Mr. Speaker, I was the mover of yesterday's motion and I do not want to discuss again the decision of the House. The motion that was moved yesterday did not seek in any way the acknowledgement of our party. There was no such intention in it and maybe it should be read again in the House. The motion dealt exclusively with the standing orders governing the proceedings of the House, which have been accepted by members who have sat in this House long before me and to which there should be no exception except by unanimous consent. This tradition prevails not only in this Parliament but in all parliaments of British tradition. We are ruled not only by the standing orders but by tradition as well.

Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) who stands as the conscience of this Parliament—at least that is the reputation he has—since he is an expert on parliamentary procedure, did not remind all my colleagues that in 1958, at which time there was a Progressive Conservative government with 208 hon. members—it then held the majority—there were only eight CCF members, there was a CCF member on yesterday's famous committee, and the House accepted the suggestion unanimously. Mr. Hazen Argue was the chairman of the committee, the first to be appointed by Mr. John Diefenbaker.

Mr. Speaker, I thought there was room for gentlemanliness in this Parliament. I examined the precedents in this House. I would be the first party leader ever to sit in this House to whom would be denied the right to speak, to reply to the Speech from the Throne, after the spokesmen for the other parties. Mr. Speaker, as precedents govern future relations between parliamentarians, the precedent which may be created today runs the risk of suggesting a line of conduct to be

[*Mr. Speaker.*]

followed by those who will sit after you in the Speaker's chair. The matter is extremely serious. In 1963-64, Robert Thompson, leader of a five-member party, was allowed to speak. Why? Because our Standing Orders, Mr. Speaker—and I shall close on these words—because the standing orders which govern the business of the House of Commons do not define the status of the parties that are recognized or otherwise. There is absolutely nothing in our rules on that question. The only thing that governs those rulings is tradition, precedents. I have always been told that parliamentary tradition was something sacred to our Anglophone fellow-citizens. That is what I have always heard.

So, I am surprised to realize that today, despite the mandate given to us by our electors, there should be some kind of complicity between both sides of the House in attempting to have us sit as independents. With all due deference to our political adversaries, and anyone else, Mr. Speaker, we will not sit as independents. We were elected as members of the Social Credit Party of Canada. I took on the responsibility of leading that party and I intend to assume it fully. That is why I am asking you, Mr. Speaker, to postpone your ruling for tonight. Sleep on it, as the old saying goes. There are three minutes left before six, so it is too late for me to make my speech tonight. If it is permissible to think aloud even in this House, I think that if the idea was to prevent us from taking the floor tonight it has been successful indeed.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am asking you sincerely, taking into account the seriousness of the issue at stake and what I said yesterday and repeat again today, namely the fact that more ballots have been cast for us than for all members in six provinces, why is it that they enjoy a different status at this moment of our history when more and more people ponder on the future of this country? Mr. Speaker, I cannot emphasize enough the significance of the decision you must take and how heavy the consequences. That is why, Mr. Speaker, with all due respect I urge you to give it serious consideration and let us know tomorrow morning the decision you will have reached in your wisdom.

[*English*]

Mr. Peters: Mr. Speaker, I was concerned yesterday and I am concerned today with the decision made in a very roundabout manner concerning the matter of the status of the Social Credit party. I think I can safely say, probably being on the extreme left and they being on the extreme right, that there is no philosophical reason for my defence. Over the years I have looked at the changes made in the party structure here, most of them having been done in a roundabout manner.

Yesterday we had a motion which affected Standing Order 65, one very specific position. A decision was made which meant the Social Credit has no right to have a member on the striking committee. That was the decision. I object to us expanding that to making the decision Social Credit is no longer a party of this House but its members are now