

*The Address*

I am sure that caucus would agree with my suggestion concerning these changes when they are brought forward and we look at the meat of the legislation. Please let us not tinker with the MP pension system just so it looks good. Let us actually make some substantive changes so that we can say that this was the government and these were the opposition parties—all of them in this House—that said they were going to change this and that will make a difference in the politics of this country.

What about reforming this place? Does Parliament need to be reformed? Yes it does. Of course you and I, Madam Speaker, sat in the last House and watched the use of closure and limiting debate literally dozens of times. Let me again assure my friends with whom I visited in the lobby the last time on this side that I am going to be watching and making suggestions. I know that many people now on the government side are going to be concerned about that and give really good guidance to make sure that closure and time allotment and all these things are not slapped in.

Let us make sure that the behaviour and decorum in this House change. The 34th Parliament and the 35th election issued an incredible warning from the Canadian public to all those who would run as members of Parliament. It was this: "If you people do not behave the way any of us would behave in our boardrooms, if you people do not behave the way we would behave in our classrooms or in our private lives then we will do something about it". They did so.

We should not ever think for a minute, those of us who sit here cosy today, that they will not do it to us too if we do not make sure that we clean up the behaviour and the decorum in this House.

Let me say I appreciate that in the first couple of days we have not had these spats. Let us make sure that whatever it is we feel so passionately about we still treat each other with that dignity and respect that every one of us deserved in our private lives and that we deserve as well in our public lives.

• (1905)

There is a phantom in the Ottawa scene and it lives in this Chamber probably more than it lives anywhere else in this town or across this country and that is that it is so easy to become part of this group where we say: "We are here, we made it, some of us are back again and some of us are new here". There is something that is seeping through Parliament and that is perhaps that ego is number one. Let me remind all of us, myself included, that ego did not get us here, but it can get us out of here faster than anything we know of.

Let us make sure that we realize what our position is here and that is as a servant. We should not just say it so it sounds good, but say it so we believe firmly that we are employees of the

people who voted us in and sent us here. I believe that ego set a precedent in this place long, long ago and as my leader mentioned earlier, we will do things in this House to break precedent and I am excited about that.

Let us break the precedent of ego. Let us make sure that when we have new parties here, so many new members here and a new Speaker here that we break that phantom of Ottawa which has permeated this place and chase it out once and for all. Would we make an impression on the Canadian public? You bet we would. What a refreshing change that would be. Beware of the phantom of Ottawa that permeates this Chamber. Let us make sure that we behave in such a way that we are servants. We have an opportunity now like no other Parliament has ever had to have a fresh start and clean it out and make sure that we are going to make a more efficient, democratic and freer Parliament.

Let us make sure that if we talk about free votes in this House of Commons that they are free and not just that they sound free. In the last Parliament we had a few free votes and unfortunately the public saw on TV just a particular member. What I got to see was the whole thing where the whip or somebody would come around and try to convince someone: "Oh, no, you don't want to do that". Let us make sure that if we talk free votes then we really act on free votes. That will free this place up and chase that phantom out faster than anything else. I think the Canadian public would really notice that.

What about members of Parliament who get here and are safe for the whole term with a majority government? May we trust the people who put us here to be our board of directors so that they would be able to call us home as shareholders if we are not doing our job? I introduced and I am reintroducing my private member's bill on MP recall. Let us make sure that this Parliament is opened up. The phantom of job security here is so tight that nobody could chase us out. No executive director of a company would be allowed to be completely safe. Let us make sure that we open ourselves up.

I am glad to second our subamendment which will be voted on tomorrow. We cannot afford to not support a subamendment which caps the finances. We cannot afford to let parliamentary reform just slip out of our hands and talk about it so nicely and yet it did not really happen. What a sad legacy at the very beginning of this 35th Parliament if we were to just give up by default right at the beginning.

I want to finish now and conclude my remarks by just giving us all a word of encouragement, regardless of what party we are with and what our political philosophies. I have a tribute to the late Senator Stan Waters who knew many people in this House and who was certainly a good friend of mine. He was my only political ally here in 1990. Stan always said that whenever one is going ahead some place one must keep on marching no matter what deters one from that.