

An hon. Member: I was not elected as an independent, but as a Social Crediter.

Mr. Lambert (Bellechasse): The hon. member has just given me an opening. All members of the House have been elected on May 22 by means of a ballot cast by the electors. They had the choice between candidates from various parties, and after the candidate's name appeared the name of his party. This is done under an act of Parliament, and the electoral act is the same for all political parties and for all Canadians. So, with all due respect, I ask that this Parliament show that we really want harmony.

As I said at the beginning of my remarks, today is a memorable day, and if the hon. member for Beauce (Mr. Roy) is to be denied the right to take part in the debate as has always been done in the past at this stage, well, it will be a blunder, a most unfortunate blunder at a time when efforts are being made across Canada to maintain harmony in this country, to work at its further development in order that our children may inherit a good country to live in. We should not get out of our way to irk and make things easier for those who are committed to its destruction.

This is a very serious situation and it will be interpreted according to decision made today. I respectfully ask all my colleagues in this House, I ask the Chair, on the basis of the points I made, on the basis of the decision and the tradition in Parliament, that the hon. member for Beauce be allowed to express his views pursuant to past tradition. In so doing, we can rest assured of one thing, which is that Parliament will come out stronger from this mix-up, and every Canadian will perceive us as responsible people.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert) raised a point of order, and of course he has been heard by the Chair this afternoon.

I totally agree with him about precedent. I weighed carefully the specific precedents he very aptly used in support of his position in this House this afternoon. However, the difficulty I find is not simply that of considering precedent on this occasion. A vote was taken yesterday in the House; a formal decision issued from the House, and there has been not only a decision on a procedural motion, but also a specific statement by the President of the Privy Council, a specific statement by the House leader of the New Democratic Party, and finally a specific statement in yesterday's *Hansard*, the wording of which I have before me: specific statements on the motion concerning the present position of the Social Credit Party of Canada in the House. So, whatever the precedents, I must always accept the decision made by the House. I think it would be contrary to its decision and would definitely reverse the consensus reached yesterday.

It is for that reason that I did not give the floor, this afternoon, during the question period, to the hon. member for Beauce immediately after the Leader of the New Democratic

The Address—Mr. Broadbent

Party had spoken but later. I wanted to demonstrate clearly that it was still the privilege and the right of every member of this House to take part in the debate. And it is not just a matter of privilege but the right of the hon. member for Beauce or the hon. member for Bellechasse to take part in discussions during the debate on the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

It is the right of every member. Of course, there are some numerical restrictions. But it is the right of every member to take part in the debate. So, tomorrow, perhaps after some other members have spoken, I think that the hon. member for Beauce will have the right, as any other member, to participate in the debate. That is why this afternoon I gave the floor to the hon. member for Beauce during the question period, as a member of the House like any other member, but not as a party leader.

As far as the consensus reached in this House yesterday is concerned, I could not reverse it and give the Social Credit Party of Canada a status in the House which it has been denied by a formal decision and not only on a matter of procedure but by a decision which is phrased as follows, and I quote the President of Privy Council:

● (1750)

[English]

Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to prolong the discussion in the House, but I do say that there is here an important matter of principle at stake. The original motion was framed with that in mind. The hon. member for Cape Breton Highlands-Canso (Mr. MacEachen) and the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) have set out, I believe, the principles quite clearly. They do not need to be repeated. In that sense it is clear as the government House leader that I ought to indicate to the House that, based on the principle that is involved, we do not intend to support the amendment.

I should like to repeat the representations made by two other members. In the words of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, he said the following:

If we take a vote today, and the consensus seems to be that this motion will be defeated, then you, sir, will have the decision of the House that on the first occasion when the issue was raised it was felt that we should not give to five members the status of a party.

In the language of the opposition House leader, he said:

It is obvious that if there had been included in the motion a member of the Social Credit group, that would carry with it the implication that in the House of Commons, if it did approve that motion, that group would enjoy a status, particularly the leader of that group, equivalent in standing to that of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Trudeau) and the Leader of the New Democratic Party.

We do not, of course, accept the proposition—

The declarations were very specific. My difficulty is not with the precedents quoted by the hon. member. My difficulty is that on those declarations I cannot regard that decision as any other kind of decision. I can speculate, together with the other hon. members who participated in the discussion, that had a vote not been taken yesterday possibly the precedents the hon. member was arguing today would have left me in a position to accept his argument today. I do not know. But I am faced with a *fait accompli* and a decision of the House.