

Alistair Fraser, Esq.

to become almost meaningless. Yet I believe it to be an accurate description of the way in which Mr. Fraser served the House of Commons as an institution and its members as individuals. He has indeed shown selfless devotion to a task whose origin dates back to the British Parliament at the beginning of the fourteenth century.

[*English*]

Those who accept the position of Clerk of the House of Commons are not allowed to display the range of opinions and emotions which so delight the heart of a politician. Clerks are not allowed to be cantankerous, exasperated or belittling. Rather, they are teachers, conciliators and friends. They do not think of self but bend their will and their stamina to making the House of Commons work. They help each member, regardless of seniority or status, to fit his own aims and responsibilities within the parliamentary framework, bound as it is by long tradition and a maze of complicated rules and procedures.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, the description I have just given is, in fact, a portrait of Mr. Fraser. In 12 years, he himself became an institution in this House. Apart from the pressures inherent in his position, he was in a sense the key to some revolutionary changes which took place in the workings of the House of Commons and the services to its members. What comes to mind in particular is the creation of the parliamentary interns group, which benefited all parties, the growth in committee staff, the reorganization of the role of the pages of this House, who serve us all, the implementation of the broadcasting service through which our proceedings are broadcast live to the Canadian public.

[*English*]

Mr. Fraser takes with him a unique background and a parliamentary insight which I hope, indeed urge, that he share with others in the productive years which lie ahead of him. He also takes with him the gratitude and affection of members of the House.

I am delighted to second the motion moved by the Prime Minister that Mr. Fraser become an honorary officer of this House, with the hope that he will become a frequent visitor.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the New Democratic Party—and I speak also in a personal sense as one who has known Alistair Fraser for many years—I should like to indicate our wholehearted support of the motion that has been moved by the Prime Minister (Mr. Clark) and seconded by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Trudeau). Like each of them, I should like to take a moment first to say that we, too, welcome most warmly the appointment of Dr. Koester as Clerk of the House of Commons. We are already aware of his efficiency and his ability and we look forward to the years when he will be our man at the Table.

[*Mr. Trudeau.*]

With respect to Alistair Fraser, I may say that I am one of those in the House who remembers Beauchesne not just as a book but as a human being.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: And not just a spirit.

Mr. Knowles: Dr. Arthur Beauchesne was Clerk of the House of Commons when I came here. He was succeeded later by Mr. Leon Raymond, and both of them served this chamber exceedingly well. They had distinguished careers in that high office, but I am one who can say that Alistair Fraser measured up to the standards that they set.

Reference has already been made to the tremendous amount of expansion and development which has taken place during the past 12 years. This made being Clerk a different job than it had been in earlier times, and I say that this House is doing itself proud to take this moment to pay tribute to the work of Alistair Fraser. We found him in our midst to be one who was extremely friendly to all of us. We found him to be impartial and helpful in the advice that he gave to us as members, and I believe that the same could be said with regard to the advice he gave to the Chair. We also found him to be efficient in the conduct of the House of Commons. We are pleased to give to him the same honour that was given to the previous Clerks whom I mentioned by making him an honorary officer of this House. He is a young man, he has a career ahead of him, I am sure, and we wish him well in that career and happiness for many years.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, personally and on behalf of my party I am happy to second the motion of the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Clark) proposing that the new Clerk of the House of Commons be Dr. Koester. There is no doubt in our minds that he will work in co-operation with you, Mr. Speaker, and with each hon. member of the House. I have had the pleasure of knowing him for a few years and I am sure he will fulfil his duties with great competence and dedication to all members of the House.

As for Mr. Fraser, I welcome the motion proposing that he be made an honorary officer of the House of Commons. I have also had the pleasure of working with him for 11 years and he gave me judicious advice. Of course, any newly-elected member has a whole lot to learn. Occasionally, conflicts do arise and hon. members take the advice of the people we usually call the people at the Table who are the link between them and the Speaker. Mr. Fraser fulfilled his duties with know-how, integrity and impartiality. I am pleased, therefore, to say these things about him and to thank him for all the help he gave me and my party and which allowed us to better serve our country, to be more efficient in the House and, finally, to be good Canadians. All hon. members are in favour of this