

The Address—Mr. Stanfield

Mr. Saltzman: A further supplementary question. In view of the fact that it is frequently more effective to head off this kind of situation by a strong statement on the part of government, will the minister consider making such statement so as to put the automobile companies on notice?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

CONTINUATION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The house resumed, from Friday, September 13, consideration of the motion of Mr. Eymard Corbin for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his speech at the opening of the session.

[Translation]

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I wish to extend my congratulations to the hon. member for Madawaska-Victoria (Mr. Corbin), who had the honour of being chosen by his colleagues to move the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

It would be ungracious on my part to begrudge certain excerpts of his speech with which the opposition did not agree, but everybody will agree, I believe, that he showed himself a very pleasant speaker, and I am happy to add his name to the list of members I can understand without the help of simultaneous translation.

[English]

I do not know, sir, whether that is a compliment, but it is meant to be.

[Translation]

He is proud, and rightly so, of representing the constituency of Madawaska-Victoria. In view of his first participation in the business of this house, I am inclined to believe that his election is not so catastrophic as I would have had the people believe at the time of my pleasant visit to his constituency during the election campaign. I do hope, Mr. Speaker, that the very great discretion which seems incumbent on government members will not deprive the house of the pleasure of hearing the representative for Madawaska-Victoria.

• (3:30 p.m.)

[English]

I also wish to congratulate the hon. member for Kamloops-Cariboo (Mr. Marchand)

[Mr. Speaker.]

who seconded the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. I welcome him to the house for his personal qualities and for what he represents. He spoke eloquently on behalf of the native peoples of Canada and his presence here reminds us of some of our obligations.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Stanfield: I also thank him for his courteous reference to his predecessor from the constituency he now represents, the Hon. Davie Fulton.

Again I extend my congratulations to you, Mr. Speaker, and offer my best wishes to you. By achieving a permanent Speaker we will have taken a first step toward freeing the Chair from all suggestions that it is influenced by partisan considerations. Without reservation I offer my congratulations to the Deputy Speaker and to the Deputy Chairman of Committees. I express the hope that in future the Deputy Speaker may be chosen from a party other than the party in power.

In recent years it has been the practice of the Deputy Speaker to vote when the house has divided. It might be well, in order to enhance the dignity of that office and to render its incumbent even more impartial than at present, if the Deputy Speaker did not in future take part in divisions of the house. Certainly, sir, the steps which have been taken represent important steps toward parliamentary reform.

There has been much public interest, as there ought to be, and much discussion outside the house about the reform of the rules of parliament. It now appears that we may have to enter into discussions which will determine the interim arrangements under which we shall conduct our business until permanent rule changes are adopted. This party wishes parliament to operate as soon as possible under permanent rules that are agreed on by members on both sides of the house.

In the light of experience of recent years we want to make perfectly sure that this time the adoption of any interim arrangements is not used to delay or frustrate progress toward permanent rules.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Stanfield: Once bitten, twice shy. There is no question of being twice bitten. We are determined to surround the adoption of any interim arrangements with safeguards which are as foolproof as possible. We fully realize