

*Dissolution of Parliament*

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, I quite agree with Your Honour's suggestion that the Prime Minister should be allowed to make this statement; but I do feel that your statement as to the right of representatives of the other parties to speak afterward should not be conditional. I think Your Honour will agree that this announcement is such that the other parties should have a chance to speak through their leaders, and I am sure if you would give that undertaking now there would be no further objection to whatever the Prime Minister wishes to say.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** I thought I had been challenged to give reasons and I was going to quote the words of my friend the hon. member for Coast-Capilano, but I shall refrain from doing so.

**Mr. Sinclair:** You will be quoting a good source if you do.

**Mr. Bell (Saint John-Albert):** Who is conceited now?

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** The hon. member for Coast-Capilano has made a very good answer, since he challenged us to call an election over and over again.

**Mr. Sinclair:** All by myself with my little hatchet I chopped down the cherry tree.

**Mr. Speaker:** Perhaps hon. members will allow me to refer to the point of order raised by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre. I think all hon. members will agree this is perhaps an unusual situation that is not ordinarily met with, and when I reserved my decision as to what might follow the Prime Minister's statement I did so having in mind what the nature of his announcement might be. I do make this acceptance of what has been said by hon. members on the left. This is a statement about business of the house and not a time for a debate, and I would not consider it proper for the Prime Minister to give more than a factual foundation for the statement he is to make.

**Mr. Sinclair:** In that case, Mr. Speaker, I rise again on this point of order. You, sir, said the Prime Minister is making a statement. He can do so now only with the consent of the house to revert to motions. You have accepted the procedure that on all motions the leaders of each party can reply.

**Mr. Speaker:** I have already dealt with that point. It is not necessary to revert to motions to make a statement with respect to the business of the house at this stage of the proceedings, when it is past the time for the house to adjourn.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Mr. Speaker, I shall delete from my remarks those portions that my hon. friends opposite might not like, and particularly my hon. friend who has just spoken.

**Mr. Marler:** Just observe the rules.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Having regard to all the circumstances the government cannot possibly hope to carry forward its long-term program of the development of resources and strengthening of the Canadian economy and the building of a bright future for Canadians unless it can be assured of sufficient support in the house.

**Mr. Sinclair:** What about the South Saskatchewan dam?

**An hon. Member:** What a phony.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Indeed, the government's program has encountered increasing obstruction and delays in the house. As the House of Commons is divided today, stability in government is impossible of achievement. Accordingly we believe that for effective government the responsibility of carrying on the government of Canada should be fortified by a direct and unquestioned mandate from the people. Therefore an immediate appeal to the country is necessary.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** I now conclude, sir, by saying that the present parliament of Canada has been dissolved by proclamation under the Great Seal of Canada bearing date the 1st day of February, and members and senators are discharged from attendance. The election date will be March 31 next—

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:**—and the new parliament is being summoned to convene on May 5. As the proclamation points out, this parliament is now dissolved.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker—

**An hon. Member:** The Speaker is on his feet.

**Mr. Speaker:** My view of the situation in view of the announcement is that this House of Commons has no further existence, and it only remains—

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** What about the rights of parliament?

**Mr. Sinclair:** The rights of parliament, eh?

**Some hon. Members:** Closure.

**Some hon. Members:** Black Saturday.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. It only remains now for me to leave the chair.