

Governor General's Speech

Honourable Mr. Black was conducted from his seat in the House to the Speaker's chair by Hon. R. B. Bennett and Hon. Hugh Guthrie.

Mr. SPEAKER-ELECT said: It is with sincere gratitude that I thank my fellow members for the great honour they have conferred upon me by electing me to the exalted office of Speaker of the House of Commons. Fully appreciating my unworthiness of such a mark of distinction, its bestowal is the more gratefully acknowledged. As a member of this house for nearly a decade I have had the pleasure and privilege of forming personal friendships with the great majority of the members of that period. I look forward to the same happy experience in meeting the new members. There are among the members of the House of Commons many having a profound knowledge of the established rules and usages of this institution and I am confident that in my endeavour to maintain and uphold the traditions, privileges, liberties and customs of the house they will extend to me the benefit of that knowledge and experience and that thereby those rights, privileges and complete freedom of speech with due decorum may be preserved. It is my desire, as presiding officer, to conduct myself with such impartiality that when the time comes for me to vacate this office the members will retain for me the same measure of respect, regard and good will that has been so graciously expressed to-day.

Mr. BENNETT moved:

That when this house adjourns it stand adjourned until three o'clock this afternoon.

Motion agreed to.

On motion of Mr. Bennett the house adjourned at 12.40 p.m.

The house met at three o'clock.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

Mr. Speaker read a communication from the Governor General's secretary announcing that His Excellency would proceed to the Senate chamber at 3 p.m. on this day for the purpose of formally opening the session of the Dominion parliament.

A message was delivered by Major A. R. Thompson, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, as follows:

Mr. Speaker, His Excellency the Governor General desires the immediate attendance of this honourable house in the chamber of the honourable the Senate.

[Mr. Gardiner.]

Accordingly the house went up to the Senate chamber. Then the Hon. George Black, Speaker-elect, said:

May it please Your Excellency,

The House of Commons have elected me as their Speaker, though I am but little able to fulfil the important duties thus assigned to me. If in the performance of those duties I should at any time fall into error, I pray that the fault may be imputed to me, and not to the Commons whose servant I am.

The honourable the Speaker of the Senate, addressing the honourable the Speaker of the House, then said:

Mr. Speaker, I am commanded by His Excellency the Governor General to assure you that your words and actions will constantly receive from him the most favourable construction.

Then His Excellency the Governor General was pleased to open parliament by a speech from the throne.

And the house being returned to the Commons chamber:

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to state that the house having attended on His Excellency the Governor General in the Senate chamber, I informed His Excellency that the choice of Speaker had fallen upon me, and, in your names, and on your behalf, I made the usual claim for your privileges, which His Excellency was pleased to confirm to you.

OATHS OF OFFICE

Hon. R. B. BENNETT (Prime Minister) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 1, respecting the administration of oaths of office.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S SPEECH

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the house that when the house did attend His Excellency the Governor General this day in the Senate chamber, His Excellency was pleased to make a speech to both houses of Parliament. To prevent mistakes I have obtained a copy, which is as follows: Honourable Members of the Senate:

Members of the House of Commons:

It affords me great satisfaction to be associated with you in the important duties upon which you are about to enter at this the first session of the seventeenth parliament of Canada.

The necessity for dealing with exceptional economic conditions with the resultant unemployment has induced me to summon you at an earlier date than would otherwise be necessary. Measures will be submitted for your consideration, including amendments to the Customs Act and the Customs Tariff which it is anticipated will do much to meet the unusual conditions which now prevail.