

British custom he continues in office during the time he is in parliament. He is given a pension when he retires, and sometimes is elevated to the peerage. Some of these rewards, perhaps fortunately, we are not in a position to bestow in this country. But as to the position being made a secure one, I believe all will agree that the certainty of tenure the British system affords is an important consideration and factor in the position of one who is to discharge the responsibilities to which I have referred.

Neither I nor any who sit on this side have any exception to take to the name which has been proposed. But we do not forget that our hon. friend from the Yukon has been in his day a strong partisan, and I hope he will not mind if I say to him that we trust and believe that when he takes the office of Speaker he will accept it in the spirit in which members of the bar, promoted to the bench in our country, have so generally accepted office, leaving partisanship behind them and regarding themselves as guardians of the rights of those not on one side only but on both.

I can assure my hon. friend that if he is as careful of the rights of those to the left as of the chair as of those to the right, if he will have the same regard for the rights and privileges of the minority as of the majority, he will always receive from those of us who sit to his left the respect and deference which are due to his high position. I congratulate him upon being nominated to this position and I wish him well in the office so long as he may continue to occupy it.

While I have no exception to take to the nomination which has been made, I recall that, in 1921 when I was sitting opposite, where my hon. friend is at the moment, his predecessor in the leadership of the Conservative party took very strong exception at that time to the fact that the name of the Speaker had been announced prior to the time at which parliament was in session. My hon. friend will see on Hansard that Mr. Meighen took the view that the government have not any right as such to name a speaker, that the Speaker is essentially an officer of the House of Commons; he is an appointee of the House of Commons and is in no sense an appointee of the government. Of course, one would expect that a government, and especially a government with the majority such as hon. gentlemen opposite have, would be expected to name the person who was to occupy the position of Speaker, but my hon. friend has laid stress on British custom, and I think he will agree that I am right when I say that at Westminster it is usually left to a private member on the

government side of the house to make the nomination albeit in accord with the wishes of the government.

I have no desire to be critical in a small way regarding a matter of this kind. I think much can be said for letting the public know in advance of the assembling of parliament who in all probability is likely to receive the appointment. However, I feel that something should be said against the zeal which hon. gentlemen opposite have displayed not only in filling the office immediately but in installing its occupant in office before the House of Commons itself has appointed him to the position. Section 15 of chapter 145, the statute in respect to the House of Commons, reads as follows:

The person who fills the office of Speaker at the time of any dissolution of parliament, shall, for the purpose of the following provisions of this act, be deemed to be the Speaker until a Speaker is chosen by the new parliament.

I submit that my hon. friend as Prime Minister, with respect to the appointment of one who is to be custodian of the rights and privileges of parliament, might have given additional thought to the importance of conserving in form, appearance and even in reality those customs upon which he has laid so great emphasis, the customs which come to us from long tradition and practice in the British parliament.

While I have that one discordant note to sound, which I feel this action calls for, may I say again that in no way is it intended to reflect upon the gentleman whose name has been put in nomination, and I once more congratulate him on behalf of those who are sitting in opposition and, as I have said, wish him well during the time he may be in office.

Mr. ROBERT GARDINER (Acadia): Mr. Beauchesne, on behalf of the group in this corner of the house I have very much pleasure in supporting the motion of the Prime Minister. We have had the privilege of knowing the hon. member for the Yukon (Mr. Black) since 1922 and while he has been a party man we have found him to be always very fair and impartial. Let me assure the hon. gentleman that when he becomes the first officer of this house he will always secure the support of the hon. members in this corner of the house provided he continues in that spirit of impartiality.

The Clerk of the House declared the motion carried in the affirmative, nemine contradicente, and Honourable George Black, member for the electoral district of Yukon, duly elected to the chair of the House.