

Election of Speaker

[English]

It is not absolutely necessary that he be newly married—

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: —or that his wife be bilingual, as is the case with the present nominee for this exalted position. This is simply an added bonus in the case of the Hon. Member for Don Valley West.

I am happy to report to the House that we have managed to find in his person an individual possessing to the highest degree all the qualities necessary for this vital position in our parliamentary structure.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mulroney: He is tactful. He is informed of the rules and procedures of the House. He possesses in full—and of this there can be no doubt—the integrity and ability required for this vital role.

I am also happy that this is the view of the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner) and the view, as well, of the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Broadbent) who may have some comments in regard to the procedure which perhaps are different and—who knows—perhaps for a better procedure for the selection of Speakers in the future. However, we all agree that the Hon. Member for Don Valley West possesses all the high qualities required for this vital job.

The Hon. Member for Don Valley West came to the House in 1979 and almost immediately became conspicuous for the energy which he directed to his parliamentary duties. He developed a deep respect for this House, a love of its traditions, an understanding of its procedures and an admiration for all those who strive so mightily to become its Members. He combines these qualities with a sense of history and a sense of humour. Neither shall be a burden to him here.

[Translation]

I therefore have the privilege to move the nomination of the Hon. Member for Don Valley West (Mr. Bosley) as Speaker of the House of Commons.

[English]

I am therefore privileged to propose the Hon. Member for Don Valley West as Speaker of the House of Commons.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Dr. Koester, first may I say what a great privilege and honour it is to have been elected once again to this House of Commons. I want to thank the people of Vancouver Quadra who did me this honour and to assure them that I will do my utmost in turn to merit their confidence and their trust.

I am very pleased to rise in my place today to second the nomination of the Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) of Mr. John Bosley as Speaker of this House. I might say, had circumstances been different, I would have preferred to move

the motion than to second it. However, I understand what the people of Canada have said and accept that fully.

I am also very happy to see Mr. Stanley Knowles sitting at the Table.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): He sits as an honorary Member of this House. No doubt his wisdom and experience will be of immense assistance to the new Speaker particularly, and to all of us in this Chamber.

Without in any way derogating from the choice which I second today, it might be well for future Parliaments to consider what the unanimous report of the Special Committee on Standing Orders and Procedure recommended in the last Parliament, namely, the adoption of a new Standing Order which would provide for the election of the Speaker by secret ballot by all Members of the House. That will be something for a future Parliament to consider. As I have said, that in no way derogates from our approval of the particular choice this morning.

Perhaps it is also appropriate on this Guy Fawkes Day, as we open Parliament and elect a Speaker, that we remember that democratic institutions have sometimes been under attack, the Mother of Parliaments, to a lesser extent in this country than in other parts of the free world. Recent events indicate to us what a precious and fragile thing democracy is. The Speaker represents this Commons as the embodiment of the will of the people. Protecting the rights and privileges of this House will be Mr. Bosley's primary concern and, more important, defending the rights and privileges of its Members.

It is particularly important in this Parliament, with the large majority on the Government side—and I might say surrounding us—that the Speaker exercise special care and vigilance in the protection of the rights of Hon. Members and, might I say, the traditional rights of Her Majesty's Loyal and Official Opposition.

[Translation]

In this Parliament, where the Government has a considerable majority, it is particularly important that the Speaker should exercise special vigilance in protecting the rights of Members forming the Official Opposition in this House.

● (1140)

[English]

From this point forward, Mr. Bosley must abandon all partisan loyalties and render decisions which are free of any hint of partisanship or bias. As Beauchesne says, confidence in the impartiality of the Speaker is an indispensable condition of the successful working of procedure. He must be fair and impartial in all his rulings, and above all he must be independent.