

CANADA

House of Commons Debates

OFFICIAL REPORT

FIRST SESSION—SEVENTEENTH PARLIAMENT

The sixteenth parliament having been prorogued on the thirtieth day of May, 1930, and dissolved by proclamation on the same day, and writs having been issued and returned, a new parliament was summoned to meet for the despatch of business on Monday, September 8, 1930, and did accordingly meet on that day.

Monday, September 8, 1930

ELECTION OF SPEAKER

This being the day on which parliament is convoked by proclamation of the Governor General for the despatch of business, and the members of the house being assembled:

Arthur Beauséne, Esquire, M.A., K.C., the Clerk of the House, read to the house a letter from the Governor General's secretary informing him that the Chief Justice of Canada, in his capacity as Deputy Governor General, would proceed to the Senate chamber on Monday, the 8th of September, at 12 noon, to open the session.

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

Gentlemen of the House of Commons:

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

Accordingly the house went up to the Senate chamber, when the Speaker of the Senate said:

Honourable Gentlemen of the Senate:

Gentlemen of the House of Commons:

I have it in command to let you know that His Excellency the Governor General does not see fit to declare the causes of the summoning the present Parliament of Canada until the Speaker of the House of Commons shall have been chosen according to law; but to-day, at the hour of three o'clock in the afternoon, His Excellency will declare the causes of calling this parliament.

And the members being returned to the Commons chamber.

Hon. R. B. BENNETT (Prime Minister):
Mr. Beauséne, we have just been advised on behalf of the representative of our gracious sovereign to organize this house by electing a Speaker.

For upwards of six hundred years we have a record of the presiding officers in the mother of parliaments. The practice and procedure of that great assembly we have made the basis of our own. The 245 members of this house and of our democratic institutions are chosen to represent and speak for the millions of electors throughout the Dominion. We are now about to choose a Speaker to represent, and, as the name implies, speak for this assembly as one branch of the parliament of Canada. In the early days of parliamentary institutions such speaking was often very much to the point and did not always give pleasure to the king.

In addition to being Speaker of and for this house, the member about to be elected will be its presiding officer. It is his duty to maintain order in debate, to put the question to the house, to declare the vote on motions and direct the orderly conduct of the public business in accordance with the rules and procedure which we have adopted for that purpose. Such an officer exercises great authority. He must possess certain qualities that in the main are fairly well understood. Lord Palmerston asked Mr. Deland for his opinion of the relative merits