

pointing nothing but English speaking speakers? I do not think that would be fair; I do not think it would be just, and I do not think it would give the rights which our constitution intended to give to the two dominant races in this country.

For these reasons, Mr. Beaudesne, I desire with great respect to register the formal protest of the official opposition in regard to the course taken here this afternoon in connection with the Speakership of this House by my right hon. friend the Prime Minister. We are not disposed, however, to press the matter any further, certainly not to a division. A division would be misapprehended, and might be looked upon as in some way a personal slight or criticism of my hon. friend from Gaspé, and I can assure the House that we have no desire to make any such suggestion. I am one of those who have known the hon. member for Gaspé for a great many years now. I know something of his fitness and of his qualifications for the high office for which he has been proposed this afternoon by my right hon. friend the Prime Minister. We all admit his long experience; we all admit his great ability. It is true that during the past five years we have not on all occasions been able to agree with some of his rulings, but we have always bowed gracefully to his rulings, or we have placed ourselves within the judgment of the House of Commons. We all admire his urbanity. We all admire his wonderful patience. I confess that as I saw him in this House last January, day in and day out, night in and night out, presiding over this august assembly, I used to wonder where all his patience came from. I used to wonder what his thoughts were as he cast his eye over this chamber, and recalled that there was not a single member of the House of Commons who sat as a member of this House when the hon. member for Gaspé first entered this chamber. What a change! He saw no faces there that were in this House in 1896. He himself I think has changed the least of those who sit in this chamber to-day. He seems to have found for himself the secret of perpetual youth, and all we wish him is that he may be continued long in this chamber, not necessarily in the Speaker's chair, but long in this chamber, and that in the future he may be able to say of himself as the years go by, in the language of the poet,

For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on forever.

Mr. ROBERT GARDINER (Acadia): Mr. Beaudesne, I am in the very happy position this afternoon that I can support the nomination by the Prime Minister of the hon.

member for Gaspé (Mr. Lemieux) for the position of Speaker. Those of us who have had the opportunity of being in this chamber while he has occupied the position of Speaker can testify to his unfailing kindness, courtesy, integrity, and impartiality. I was rather pleased to hear the Prime Minister bring the question up this afternoon as he did, because we had been discussing the very same problem prior to coming into this House. The viewpoint we take is similar to that taken by the Prime Minister, but for different reasons. We believe that in view of the fact that this House contains now, and probably will in time to come, many groups, it is essential that we shall have for Speaker of the House the best man available irrespective of race or language. That is the attitude that we take in this matter. We believe that the hon. member for Gaspé is well qualified for the position. Indeed, we know of none in this House better qualified, and therefore we are willing to support the nomination of the Prime Minister.

I can quite understand, of course, that things may change. We created many new precedents last session, for instance, and we are no doubt going to create some new precedents this year, of which this is going to be one. We can quite understand, and I trust that our French-Canadian friends will recognize this as well, that in the years to come we may have a well qualified English speaker in the chair for many sessions of parliament, and we believe that it is essential in the interest of this House, in order that the business of the House may be carried on expeditiously that we should have in the Speaker's chair the best qualified member available.

Mr. R. S. WHITE (Mount Royal): Mr. Beaudesne, I venture, with a good deal of trepidation after what my parliamentary leader has said, to say a word in support of the nomination of Mr. Lemieux to the Speakership of this House, and I do it on personal grounds. It has been my good fortune and pleasure to have known Mr. Lemieux, for a period, I presume, of at least forty years, and I rejoice in the fact that my intercourse with him during that period has confirmed my respect for him as a man. He is the dean of this House, as the right hon. Prime Minister has told us. I might say that I entered this House some eight years before the hon. member for Gaspé, but I might also state that there was a great gap of thirty years between the time I resigned my position here and the time when I had the honour to re-enter this chamber. I concur absolutely,