

Election of Speaker

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Not once but four times. May I begin, with Your Honour's indulgence, by thanking the Hon. Member for Don Valley West (Mr. Bosley) for his devoted and unstinting service to the House of Commons. On the occasion preceding his resignation, I expressed my feelings to him. I also expressed what I thought about the circumstances surrounding that resignation, and I leave it there. However, I want to assure him that he carried our respect from this quarter of the House. We are very glad that he has decided to remain with us and to continue to make a contribution to the country and to the House as the Hon. Member for Don Valley West.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): As the Hon. Member for Vancouver Quadra, it is my privilege to congratulate my neighbour, the Hon. Member for Vancouver South, on being elected as first commoner. The people of Vancouver will be very proud. You, Sir, are held in enormous respect by the people of that city, of the lower mainland, and indeed of the entire province. There will be enormous goodwill flowing out to you upon your election as Speaker of the House of Commons.

[*Translation*]

I would also like to tell the Hon. Member for Verchères (Mr. Danis) that he keeps our respect as Deputy Speaker of the House. The struggle has been well fought and the result is above contestation. This has been a free vote expressed by all members of this House.

Mr. Speaker, you will allow me to express our affection for our friend the Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme). He proved himself very popular in the House and we congratulate him.

[*English*]

It has been an enormous tribute to you, Mr. Speaker, to be recognized by your peers in the House of Commons. We, elected by the people from every corner of our country, want to say that over the years you have earned the respect and affection of all Members of the House. It has been a remarkable personal comeback for you, and there must be a lot of deep emotion in your heart.

We were very encouraged by the excellent address which you gave us on assuming the chair. It gives us much confidence in your skill and the spirit in which you intend to preside over the House. I hope, Sir, you will have at least as long a term as it took to elect you!

We owe a good deal of thanks to Jim McGrath, the former Hon. Member for St. John's East, who reformed the rules. I do not think we can attribute the full scope of the procedure to Jim McGrath, because in his report he called for the name of each candidate in his or her order of standing to be announced after every vote. That would have shortened the proceedings.

While we have had a very useful exercise here—and once launched upon that exercise some of us felt that we could not change it in mid-course—it would be useful for the House Leaders to assemble to see how we might in effect refine those rules.

● (0220)

[*Translation*]

This election of our Speaker in a free vote is an important step forward for our parliamentary democracy and all of us hope that it will also foster a greater decorum in this House. You have our trust to start with and I am confident that you will keep it. As you mentioned, Mr. Speaker, there will always be vigorous debate, very frank comments, direct questions and constructive criticism but we must demonstrate daily to Canadian men and women that we deserve their trust.

[*English*]

You know what we demand of you, Mr. Speaker. Perfection! We want fairness, independence, decisiveness, patience, common sense, good humour, upholding the traditions of the House, knowledge of the rules and an intuition for the changing mood and tone of the House as we move through our days.

From time to time you are going to have difficult moments. You have already mentioned that democracy can sometimes be rough. Question Period has received a lot of criticism and I noticed this travelling the country over the summer. I say on hotlines to the people that, yes, from time to time we can improve our behaviour here.

Looking over debates preceding Confederation, looking over the times of Macdonald and Laurier and the days when I first entered the House with Mr. Diefenbaker and Mr. Pearson, there were occasions when we were not too proud of ourselves. Now television has made it national theatre, but we have the freest Parliament in the world.

Every once in a while we will be a little excessive, lose our cool and put you to the test. But it is worth it. From time to time we will disagree with your decisions but you will always have our support from this corner of the House, that I can assure you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): I wish you well, Sir. We are very proud of your election.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, I also have two confessions to make tonight. First, my father was a Conservative. And second, for the first time in my life I have voted for a Conservative and not only once but eleven times. It should be noted, Mr. Speaker, that I did not say for which Conservative I did vote. I would also like to say sincerely that