

CANADA

House of Commons Debates

OFFICIAL REPORT

Speaker: The Honourable Roland Michener

FIRST SESSION—TWENTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT

The twenty-second parliament having been prorogued on the twelfth day of April, 1957, and dissolved by proclamation on the same day, and writs having been issued and returned, a new parliament was summoned to meet for the dispatch of business on Monday, October 14, 1957, and did accordingly meet on that day.

Monday, October 14, 1957

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

Léon J. Raymond, Esquire, O.B.E., the Clerk of the House, read to the house a letter from the secretary to the Governor General informing him that the Honourable Patrick Kerwin, Chief Justice of Canada, in his capacity as Deputy Governor General, would proceed to the Senate chamber to open the first session of the twenty-third parliament of Canada on Monday, the fourteenth of October, at eleven o'clock.

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

Members of the House of Commons:

It is the desire of the Honourable the Deputy of His Excellency the Governor General that this honourable house attend him immediately 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 Members of the Senate,
and Members of the House of Commons:

I have it in command to let you know that Her Majesty the Queen does not see fit to declare the causes of her summoning the present parliament of Canada until the Speaker of the House of Commons shall have been chosen according to law, but this afternoon, at the hour of three o'clock, Her Majesty will declare the causes of calling this parliament.

And the house being returned to the Commons chamber:

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ELECTION OF SPEAKER

MR. ROLAND MICHENER, MEMBER FOR THE
ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF ST. PAUL'S

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): Mr. Raymond, what is uppermost in the minds of us all today is the opening of the twenty-third parliament by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. It is a great and joyous occasion, a shining moment of re-dedication to all the traditions and a living exemplification of our history. I do not rise on this occasion to memorialize this historic event, but only to make possible the participation of this house in that event. I know how eager we are to hear from Her Majesty, but having not as yet elected a Speaker we have no voice to speak on our behalf or no means of communication with Her Majesty. Indeed, according to law, the House of Commons is not constituted nor has it any status until that has been achieved. The representative of the crown has reminded us that Her Majesty the Queen does not see fit to disclose to us the reasons that have caused her to bring us together until we have selected a Speaker.

All this is in the tradition of parliament, for at this moment, and on this what I choose to call the Queen's day, the members of the Commons and of the Senate as well will walk with history. There is no need for me to tell you that the highest position that can be conferred on anyone, that of the first commoner, will be in the custody and keeping of that person who is chosen as Speaker. He is the link with the crown and in olden days, as the records show, the function was an arduous one, requiring great courage on the part of those chosen.