

have been pleased to confer on me by choosing me to be your Speaker.

Humbly and very sincerely, may I thank the right hon. the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), the hon. Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis), and the hon. member for Témiscamingue (Mr. Caouette) for their all too kind words. I am grateful also to the members of the House for their generosity in supporting the motion for my appointment to the high office of Speaker of this House.

Even in the best of circumstances the role of Speaker, though rewarding, of course, can also be very challenging. Most will agree that, from the Speaker's standpoint at least, the present situation can hardly be described as the best of circumstances. More than ever, therefore, the Speaker and those who share with him the responsibility of the office will have to rely upon the good will and co-operation of hon. members. Indeed, the work of the House will proceed with order and reasonable dispatch to the extent only that members endorse the rules of procedure and accept the usages, practices, customs and traditions of parliament as interpreted by the presiding officers elected for this very purpose by the House itself.

[Translation]

To deserve that co-operation from the members, the Speaker must certainly discharge his responsibilities, upholding parliamentary tradition with strict fair-mindedness. The members cannot expect less from those to whom they entrust the conduct of our proceedings. I hope that under all circumstances, it will be possible for me to justify the confidence of my colleagues. At all times, they may rely on my good faith and good will.

I again thank the House for the great honour bestowed upon me. It is an honour which I share not only with my wife and my family, but with all my constituents of Stormont-Dundas which I proudly represent in this parliament.

[English]

Again, with humility, I thank hon. members and wish them well in the dispatch of their responsibilities in the House and in their endeavours on behalf of their constituents and the people of Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SITTING SUSPENDED

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I suggest that this sitting be suspended until three o'clock this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker: The House has heard the suggestion made by the right hon. the Prime Minister. Is it agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: This House stands suspended until three o'clock this afternoon.

At 11.08 a.m. the sitting was suspended until 3 p.m. this day.

Opening of Session

SITTING RESUMED

The House resumed at three o'clock.

* * *

• (1510)

OPENING OF THE SESSION

Mr. Speaker read a communication from the Governor General's secretary announcing that His Excellency the Governor General would proceed to the Senate chamber at three o'clock on this day, for the purpose of formally opening the session of the dominion parliament.

A message was delivered by Major A. G. Vandelac, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, as follows:

Mr. Speaker, it is the pleasure of His Excellency the Governor General that this honourable House attend him immediately in the chamber of the honourable the Senate.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker with the House went up to the Senate chamber. Then the Hon. Lucien Lamoureux, Speaker of the House of Commons, said:

May it please Your Excellency,

The House of Commons have elected me their Speaker, though I am but little able to fulfil the important duties thus assigned to me.

If in the performance of those duties I should at any time fall into error, I pray that the fault may be imputed to me, and not to the Commons, whose servant I am, and who, through me, the better to enable them to discharge their duty to their Queen and country, humbly claim all their undoubted rights and privileges, especially that they may have freedom of speech in their debates, access to Your Excellency's person at all reasonable times, and that their proceedings may receive from Your Excellency the most favourable construction.

The Honourable the Speaker of the Senate, addressing the Honourable the Speaker of the House of Commons, then said:

Mr. Speaker, I am commanded by His Excellency the Governor General to declare to you that he freely confides in the duty and attachment of the House of Commons to Her Majesty's person and government, and not doubting that their proceedings will be conducted with wisdom, temper and prudence, he grants and upon all occasions will recognize and allow their constitutional privileges.

I am commanded also to assure you that the Commons shall have ready access to His Excellency upon all reasonable occasions, and that their proceedings, as well as your words and actions, will constantly receive from him the most favourable construction.

Then His Excellency the Governor General was pleased to open parliament by a speech from the throne.

And the House being returned to the Commons Chamber:

• (1610)

Mr. Speaker: I have the honour to report that, the House having attended on His Excellency the Governor General in the Senate Chamber, I informed His Excellency that the choice of Speaker had fallen upon me, and in your names, and on your behalf, I made the usual claim for your privileges, which His Excellency was pleased to confirm to you.