

Election of Speaker

civility within a context of reasonable order. It requires respect for and adherence to the rules of the House, not because these rules have been imposed upon us but because we have agreed to conduct our proceedings by these rules. And it requires of your Speaker fairness, firmness and consistency and an understanding of the essential role of each Hon. Member to speak out on the matters of concern to our country. This demands the highest independence from pressure or bias recognizing as it does that your Speaker is the servant of this House.

It is appropriate to be reminded again of those historic words of the Speaker in 1642 when the King entered the House of Commons with an armed force and demanded that the Speaker reveal the whereabouts of some Members. The Speaker said: "May it please Your Majesty, I have neither eyes to see nor tongue to speak in this place, but as the House is pleased to direct me, whose servant I am".

[Translation]

I am your servant. I need your help in order to carry out my responsibilities. I promise to do everything I can to serve you well and I thank you for this privilege.

[English]

(And the Mace having been laid upon the Table:)

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner), the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Broadbent) and I will take the liberty of saying a few words. We all hoped to say a few appropriate words tonight but, Mr. Speaker, we have had so little time to prepare.

Parliament, Mr. Speaker, has made history today, and you, Sir, are here as its principal witness.

● (0210)

Parliamentary reform has begun slowly to envelop this institution, making it and its Members stronger and more independent. In some measure all of us have failed Parliament these last few years. A democratic instrument requires respect to renew itself and to grow.

[Translation]

As a symbol of our democracy, you are entitled to preside over our debates which you have described as vigorous, Mr. Speaker, but in the spirit of tolerance and understanding which is essential if we do not want to distort all the basic rules of the game.

I congratulate you on your election and I offer you my loyal and respectful co-operation.

[English]

To guide our deliberations I am sure all Members will, with respect to you, Mr. Speaker, commit to begin again traditions of mutual respect and reasonable serenity, as best one can in a House of vigorous debate, in the interests of the House and in the interests of Canada.

Good luck, and may God bless you, Sir, and this House.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a word about the Hon. Member for Don Valley West (Mr. Bosley).

[English]

I am happy to have this brief opportunity to express to all Members, on behalf of the Government, our appreciation of his courage and dignity and the good humour with which he discharged his onerous responsibilities. The role of Speaker is most vital in making Parliament work, and it was carried out by the Hon. Member for Don Valley West (Mr. Bosley) with rare dedication and energy.

May I say to the Member that in his letter to me he referred to the House being "in a crisis of our own making". You, sir, were right, and now we must make it right. You referred to your wish to effect parliamentary reform and to restore the spirit of respect by pressing ahead with the direct election of a Speaker. Throughout you have exhibited tolerance and understanding of the needs of this great institution, which all of us respect and appreciate.

[Translation]

Your loyalty to Parliament and its institutions, your acute sense of fairness and your conviction that the Speaker is above all the defender of the Members' rights and privileges will always be a source of inspiration for your successors. You have brought to this office, the most difficult of parliamentary responsibilities, a major element of courtesy and quickwittedness.

Today, Mr. Speaker, thanks to the Hon. Members, we are now going through a new stage in the reform of this noble institution in order to make it more sensitive to the wishes and expectations of the Hon. Members and of the people we represent.

[English]

To the Hon. Member for Don Valley West, and on behalf of all Hon. Members of the House, I take the liberty of extending the gratitude and good wishes of all Members of Parliament who know how difficult and how challenging is the Chair. We have not been easy; the last two years have not been easy.

May I, through you, Sir, as the new Speaker of the House, pay tribute to the Hon. Member for Don Valley West and say that we best renew the House by reviewing our own attitudes and by renewing our commitment to you, Sir, as the symbol of authority and respect, not only of the House, but of the values the House seeks to represent.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, what took us about 11 hours was a very worth-while experience indeed. For some of us it was an extremely difficult experience. It was the first time in my life that I ever voted for a Tory!