

Election of Speaker

rights and liberties acquired in a long history; he is one of the main pillars of our constitution.

That was said in effect this morning by both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. That great parliamentarian, Gladstone, once said that the Speaker's job was to give the house protection against itself. As we all know, years ago the position of Speaker was a dangerous one. I recall how Charles I went to parliament in 1642 and demanded the arrest of five members of the House of Commons. At that time Speaker Lenthall replied:

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 here.

In other words, "I am the servant of the members of the House of Commons and of none other."

This morning we have appointed a new Speaker, one who follows a long line of distinguished Speakers of this House of Commons, none of whom, may I say, was more distinguished and fairer than the gentleman who retired at the end of the last parliament. In Mr. Rene Beaudoin we have a Speaker who has demonstrated, as has already been said, his fairness from time to time, and I have little doubt that when this parliament ends he too will be remembered as a distinguished occupant of this historic chair. I have very great pleasure on behalf of those associated with me, and particularly of those who were here before when Mr. Beaudoin was Deputy Speaker, in supporting the motion moved by the Prime Minister and seconded by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Solon E. Low (Peace River): Mr. Raymond, I have great pleasure at this time on behalf of my colleagues in supporting the motion moved by the Prime Minister and seconded by the Leader of the Opposition. I also express satisfaction that the precedent has been established of having the Leader of the Opposition join with the Prime Minister in this motion.

Over the past few years we have witnessed the demonstrations of ability, the impartiality and the fairness of Mr. Rene Beaudoin, and therefore we want to express our confidence in him at this time and congratulate the Prime Minister upon the selection he has made for the position of Speaker of the house. We also want to assure Mr. Beaudoin of our sincere desire at all times to assist him in maintaining a high standard of decorum in the house, and in his efforts to achieve dispatch and efficiency in the business of the country. We are very glad to support the motion.

The Clerk of the House declared the motion carried in the affirmative, *nemine con-*

tradente, and L. Rene Beaudoin, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Vaudreuil-Soulanges, duly elected to the chair of the house.

Mr. Beaudoin was conducted from his seat in the house to the Speaker's chair by Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent and Hon. George A. Drew.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. members of the House of Commons, deeply moved as I am, no words of mine could adequately express my feelings at this time. To have been elected your Speaker unanimously today, the highest and most honourable position in the gift of the Commons, is more than I could have foreseen when, eight years ago, I became a member of this house. I stand here humble, grateful.

(*Translation*):

My dear fellow members, I wish to thank you for the confidence you have just shown me in electing me Speaker of this house.

The right hon. the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent), the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Drew), the hon. leader of the C.C.F. party (Mr. Coldwell), and the hon. leader of the Social Credit party (Mr. Low) have been most kind to me and I wish to express to them my most heartfelt thanks.

May I be permitted to express my gratitude to all those, relatives and friends, who have helped me attain such a high post. They, much more than myself, deserve the compliments which were addressed to me.

The honour which is being bestowed upon me is high indeed, but greater still are the responsibilities. I beseech Divine Providence to grant me all the help necessary for the fulfilment of my duties, in accordance with our noble traditions.

(*Text*):

My dear colleagues, it is my duty to maintain decorum and order in debate, to preserve our traditions, privileges, liberties, usages and customs and, in particular, to exercise impartiality and fairness and protect the rights of every individual member. My experience as Deputy Speaker has amply shown me that only with your advice, counsel and co-operation can I succeed in my new task. I shall, I assure you, strive to deserve your effective support, and endeavour at all times to prove myself worthy of your trust.

It is, I believe, true to say that the eyes of other nations, more than ever before, are turned towards Canada. Therefore I realize that the dignity of this high office and the reputation of our parliament must be most carefully safeguarded, and I shall govern myself accordingly.

I pray to Divine Providence for all assistance necessary so that I shall be able to