

*Election of Speaker*

have already benefited from them when he presided over our deliberations in the last short parliament.

The office is also important, because the Speaker of the House of Commons can do much to promote in the country respect for the House of Commons and for parliamentary institutions at a time when this is very necessary. We know also that Mr. Michener is eminently qualified for this wider service.

There is another reason why I am happy to second this proposal, and it is purely personal. Even if the hon. member for St. Paul's did not have such outstanding qualifications of personality and experience for this position, I would still be happy to see him as our Speaker because of our old and close friendship, which I value and cherish. Indeed there is about him only one thing which I have never been quite able to understand. I refer to his party affiliation, which, however, I am sure he will agree, has never interfered with our mutual regard and esteem. As Speaker this particular weakness, which perhaps he inherited, will never be noticed because of the impartial position to which I feel certain this House of Commons is now going to elect him.

Therefore, Mr. Raymond, I have the greatest pleasure, on my own behalf and on behalf of the party which I have the honour to lead in this house, to second the nomination of the hon. member for St. Paul's as our Speaker.

**Mr. Hazen Argue (Assiniboia):** Mr. Raymond, on behalf of myself and the C.C.F. group it is a pleasure for me to associate myself and my party with the words of the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition in proposing the name of Mr. Roland Michener, the hon. member for St. Paul's, as Speaker of this house. To the majority of members of this parliament Mr. Michener is relatively new. Many of us, however, have known him for a number of years. We have been associated with him in the opposition. I can look now at the government benches and say that it is by association in the opposition that we get to know each other best. We got to know Mr. Michener when we were in the opposition. We came to admire his sterling qualities. In the short parliament recently ended we found that Mr. Michener as Speaker was impartial, fair, courteous, firm and honest in all his decisions. The government knows, as do members of the opposition, that the ruling of Mr. Speaker was not always favourable to the point of order put forward by those on the government side of the house, any more than it was at all times

favourable to the point of order advanced by those on the opposition side of the house.

The Prime Minister has dealt with the precedent of alternating between an English speaking Speaker and a French speaking Speaker. In the light of all the precedents, and in the light of the short last parliament, I think the name of Mr. Michener was the best one that could have been advanced at this time. However, I feel that alternating between an English speaking Speaker in one parliament and a French speaking Speaker in a subsequent parliament is a good normal procedure. That does not, in my opinion, detract in any way from the excellent arguments that can be advanced in favour of naming a permanent Speaker. So long as we do not have a permanent Speaker, I think such alternation is ordinarily wise to follow. But in this instance, because the last parliament was so short we feel that in every respect the name of Mr. Michener was the one that should have been proposed.

It has been said by others, better than I am able to do it, that one of the important functions of the Speaker is to rule fairly on all points of order, no matter by whom they may be advanced. In the last parliament we were all a group of minorities. Confronted with a group of minorities Mr. Michener did an excellent job. In this parliament I think he will be tried even more severely than he was in the last parliament. I realize that in the last parliament we all had our thoughts, at least some of the time, on the possibility of an imminent election. But in this parliament we have a government party that has the largest majority that any government or any party has had in the Canadian House of Commons. I know the Speaker will use his office to protect the traditional rights of minorities in this house. In exercising that traditional role he will do great service to Canada, I suggest, in this parliament in protecting the rights of all members, no matter where they may sit.

It is an extreme pleasure on behalf of the C.C.F. group to associate ourselves with the motion proposing the name of Roland Michener as Speaker of this house.

**The Clerk of the House** declared the motion carried in the affirmative, *nemine contradicente*, and Roland Michener, Esquire, member for the electoral district of St. Paul's, duly elected to the chair of the house.

Mr. Michener was conducted from his seat in the house to the Speaker's chair by Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker and Hon. L. B. Pearson.