

Election of Speaker

is to be nominated, especially those of us who were here during the last parliament and were able to observe with what ability and distinction he fulfilled the office of Deputy Speaker and chairman of committees.

Hon. members will have understood from my last remark that it is my intention to move that Mr. W. Ross Macdonald, member-elect for the constituency of Brantford, be chosen to preside over our deliberations during this parliament.

Mr. Macdonald is still a young man. He was born not earlier than 1891, and for several years has been a distinguished member of the House of Commons. As we all know, Mr. Macdonald has had a distinguished career at the bar; his legal attainments and objective view of questions of order and procedure that might arise in the course of our deliberations cannot but commend themselves to those who know him. I am sure it is also an added pleasure to his colleagues in this house, in choosing him for this high office, to honour one who had such a distinguished career in the service of our country during the first world war.

The position of Speaker is of course a difficult one, but I am sure the qualifications of our colleague will enable him to discharge the responsibilities of that office not only with fairness and impartiality, but in such a manner as to add to the dignity of the proceedings of this parliament.

It is with a feeling of great satisfaction, Mr. Raymond, that I move, seconded by the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe):

That William Ross Macdonald, Esquire, member for the electoral district of Brantford, do take the chair of this house as Speaker.

Mr. George A. Drew (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Raymond, there will be wholehearted approval in all parts of this house of the name that has been mentioned in connection with this motion, which I am sure will be supported unanimously. I have not had the extended experience others have had of sitting in this house with Mr. Macdonald, but it happens that I had the privilege of knowing him for many years before I came here. It is a fortunate thing for this house, and for the people of Canada whom this house serves, that a man of his distinction and ability should have occupied already the position of Deputy Speaker with satisfaction to all hon. members.

As has been pointed out by the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent), Mr. Macdonald has had long years of public service in the legal profession, in the military forces and in local public service. He has been a member of this house for many years, and I feel sure there will be no more distinguished part of his service than that which he will

[Mr. St. Laurent.]

give as Speaker of this house, where, as the one in whose hands lies the authority of the house itself, his judicial qualities and wide experience will guide the discussions in the Commons, which have so much to do with the welfare of everyone in Canada. I wish simply to add my words of hearty approval of this motion, and to express my confidence that Mr. Macdonald will be a worthy successor to the distinguished men who have preceded him. I feel sure I speak for all those sitting with me when I wish him health and happiness in the occupancy of the office to which he will be chosen.

Mr. M. J. Coldwell (Rosetown-Biggar): Mr. Raymond, it gives me personally a great deal of pleasure to support the motion of the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent), as well as to do so on behalf of the party we represent in this house.

As the Prime Minister has said, Mr. Ross Macdonald was elected to parliament in 1935, and some of us have been associated with him ever since. We respect him, and we have grown to have an affection for him, not only because of his unflinching courtesy in all matters having to do with the business of the house, but because in many respects he is a man of modesty. I am quite sure the high honour and dignity attached to the office of Speaker of the house will be maintained by him, and that his occupancy of the office will be worthy of the best among those who have presided over the business of the house in the past.

In this house, constituted as it is following the election, it is essential that the Speaker show impartiality and fairness to all hon. members, regardless of the party to which they belong and regardless of where they sit in this chamber. I am reminded of statements made by Speakers of the British house from time to time, that it is the duty of the Speaker to protect individuals or groups who find themselves in a minority position. I have no doubt that Mr. Macdonald will do that.

It is therefore with the greatest pleasure that, on behalf of those who sit with me, as well as on my own behalf, I support the motion presented by the Prime Minister.

Mr. Solon E. Low (Peace River): Mr. Raymond, I should like to indicate, on behalf of the group for which I speak, approval of the motion moved by the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent). We believe that Mr. Macdonald is well fitted for the very high office for which he has been nominated. We shall support the Prime Minister's motion.

The Clerk of the House declared the motion carried in the affirmative, *nemine contradicente*, and the Hon. W. Ross Macdonald,