

House of Commons Debates

OFFICIAL REPORT

FIRST SESSION—TWENTIETH PARLIAMENT

The nineteenth parliament having been prorogued and dissolved by proclamation on Monday, April 16, 1945, and writs having been issued and returned, a new parliament was summoned to meet for the dispatch of business on Thursday, September 6, 1945, and did accordingly meet on that day.

Speaker: The Honourable GASPARD FAUTEUX

Thursday, September 6, 1945.

This being the day on which parliament is convoked by proclamation of His Excellency the Governor General for the dispatch of business, and the members of the house being assembled:

Arthur Beaudesne, Esquire, C.M.G., M.A., K.C., F.R.S.C., the Clerk of the House, read to the house a letter from the Assistant Secretary to the Governor General informing him that the Honourable Mr. Justice Thibaudau Rinfret, in his capacity as Deputy Governor General, would proceed to the Senate chamber on Thursday, the 6th of September, at 11 a.m., to open the session.

A message was delivered by Charles H. Larose, Esquire, Acting Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, as follows:—

Gentlemen of the House of Commons:

His Honour, the Deputy of His Excellency the Governor General, desires the immediate attendance of this honourable house in the chamber of the honourable the Senate.

Accordingly the house went up to the Senate chamber, when the Speaker of the Senate said:

Honourable Gentlemen of the Senate:

Gentlemen of the House of Commons:

I have it in command to let you know that His Excellency the Governor General does not see fit to declare the causes of his summoning the present parliament of Canada until the Speaker of the House of Commons shall have been chosen according to law; but this afternoon, at the hour of three o'clock in the afternoon, His Excellency will declare the causes of calling this parliament.

And the members being returned to the Commons chamber:

ELECTION OF SPEAKER

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): Mr. Beaudesne, the first duty of the Commons at the beginning of a

new parliament is to ascertain the reasons why His Excellency the Governor General, the king's representative, has summoned its members to meet with him in parliament. As hon. members have just been made aware, His Excellency is not prepared to impart those reasons until the Commons have elected a Speaker. As a matter of fact the house itself will not be duly constituted until a Speaker has been elected; therefore our first duty this morning is to choose a Speaker.

In matters of parliamentary procedure our parliament largely follows the procedure at Westminster; there are certain differences, however, that, in the past, have been observed in reference to the selection of a Speaker. The first difference is that at Westminster the Speaker of one parliament, if he proves to be acceptable, is frequently reelected from parliament to parliament. I recall quite well the occasion when Mr. Speaker Lowther of the House of Commons in London visited Canada some years ago and presented to this House the Speaker's chair which is in place here. It is a replica of the one at Westminster. Mr. Speaker Lowther informed our members that for sixteen years he had occupied that seat while the Commons was in session, and that, during that period of time, he had never left the precincts of parliament while either the Commons or the Lords were in session. Since Mr. Speaker Lowther's day three or four other speakers have been appointed. The latest selection was made a few days ago when Mr. Speaker Brown, who had been the Speaker in the last parliament in the United Kingdom, was again chosen Speaker. At that time this action was commented upon as being in accord with the best tradition of recognizing that where a Speaker has shown himself to be impartial, a change of government should not necessarily mean that there would be a change in the position of Speaker. The fact that Mr.