

Conduct of House Business

possibility that when we reach paragraph 9 it could be so amended. The only other remark I should like to make is that from my own viewpoint I have always favoured the abolition of appeals from rulings of both the Chairman of the Whole House and the Speaker because such appeals to the House have always in my experience been settled not on the basis of whether the Speaker was right or wrong but whether he had the support of the House. In such circumstances an appeal really has never had any great meaning.

I have one final point and it is the question of appeals from the Chairman of Committees of the Whole House to the Speaker. This can also be considered when we come to paragraph 9, but it does seem silly that the Chairman of Committees of the Whole House is called upon to hear the appeal from his own decision if he is also sitting as Deputy Speaker. I think this particular provision is not at all necessary and that there should be no appeal whatever from his decision. I believe this would make our procedure much more sensible and effective.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Chairman, a suggestion has been made in a paper, now an appendix to *Hansard*, prepared for the Committee on Procedure and Organization which sets out an alternative proposal. I do not wish to elaborate on it at this time or go into any great detail except to say that it does merit some consideration. I want to express in this delicate area of the relationship of Mr. Speaker to the House some thoughts which are held by a great number of Members in all parties and which they have expressed privately but I think are perhaps reluctant to do so in any public way.

Many Members are undoubtedly influenced or are likely to be influenced in their decision about whether or not there should be appeals from Mr. Speaker's rulings by the history of the person holding that position. I think this is not the basis upon which we should make a decision. If it were, then I would be unalterably opposed to removing the possibility of appealing Mr. Speaker's decisions because I do not have that degree of faith in his strength or determination. I will refrain from expressing any thoughts about partiality or impartiality because I think this borders too much on the possibility of transgressing common sense and decent debate with respect to the office of Mr. Speaker.

• (9:30 p.m.)

It seems to me that each person who holds the position of Speaker must of necessity earn the respect of the House. He comes to that position usually fresh from an election campaign, fresh from active participation in partisan political matters, fresh from extremely partisan political debates. Usually, almost traditionally, he comes from the ranks of the Government party. He has to earn the respect of Members of the House in that Members of the House automatically look toward each new Speaker with a somewhat jaundiced eye because of his very involvement in the political scheme of things in the nation.

We have discussed very casually, and I think in the wrong sort of way, the possibility of making the Speakership permanent or continuing and thus starting upon the course of removing Mr. Speaker from partisan political activity of one fashion or another. It seems to me that until we make that choice of removing Mr. Speaker, first, from election campaigns, second, from reliance on a political organization at home to keep him alive politically at the next election and, third, from his membership in a political party and all that that involves, then we are doing him a disservice by saying we do not want the right to appeal his rulings.

In the past Speakers—one in particular whom I will not mention—have bent under Government political pressure. Speakers have made rulings which have been basely partisan. They have made rulings which were dictated to them by the Government in office. So long as Mr. Speaker is a participant in the political field, the likelihood of that happening again is not impossible. Speakers have made errors in judgment; after all, they are only human. Speakers have backed down in their firmness because they have from time to time faced members of this House who, owing to position and temperament, were more powerful than the Speaker, Members who by their very authority, power and presence have been able to make Mr. Speaker in effect quail before them. All of this, I submit, should draw us to the conclusion that now is not the time to remove holus-bolus the right of appeal from Mr. Speaker's decisions, because his present position in the political field militates against full fairness, impartiality and judicial rulings and because it places Mr. Speaker, I submit, as long as he does not have the continuity of office which we should give him, in an awkward and delicate position at all times.