

*Election of Speaker*

divest himself from his normal party affiliations and thereby practise an impartial, even a judicial rule. He must be the servant of no party. His responsibility is to be the servant of the whole house. To that end he must have a calm and equitable temperament, and from the experience of the past, a superabundance of patience. He must be firm. He must have a good presence and a good voice; and something that we all need in public life, a reasonable degree of humour, with an adequate knowledge of the practices and procedures of the house.

The hon. gentleman whose name I shall propose has demonstrated that he has that knowledge, as well as the experience that comes from having sat as a private member of the House of Commons and also in the legislature of the province of Ontario. The choice of a Speaker is not the right or prerogative of the government, although in our country since confederation the motion that is invariably made for the appointment of the Speaker has been at all times made by the prime minister of the day.

I think I should say a word with regard to the question of a permanent Speaker. This is a subject that recurs from time to time. At Westminster, the source of our parliamentary traditions, our usages and practices, the Speaker once elected is honoured by being re-elected to the chair at the beginning of each new parliament. But there is a difference between their procedure in that regard and ours. We have, in the light of the duality of our citizenship, provided in general for succession as between the two major races. I have nothing to say on this occasion with regard to the question of a permanent Speaker; that is a matter for future parliaments to determine in the light of the circumstances that develop through the crucible of history.

This is the second occasion on which I have moved the election of a Speaker, and the motion I make concerns the same candidate whose name I placed before you last year.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Mr. Raymond, the response that has been given this suggestion indicates the generous support that his name will receive, by reason of the experience which those of us who sat in the last parliament had during his tenure of office. Some may say that this is a departure from the established practice. I may remind you that in three parliaments in the twenties one of the great custodians of that office, Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux, was appointed Speaker. He

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

was appointed first following the general election of 1921. His name was placed in nomination by the then prime minister, Mr. King. He was appointed again in the short session after the election of 1925, and finally in the new session that began following the election in 1926. During all those three sessions Mr. Lemieux acted as Speaker of the House of Commons. In the Senate, Hon. Hewitt Bostock remained Speaker during the same period of time.

Our rights, our traditions, our liberties and our ceremonies which we inherit from the past are in the custody of the Speaker of the House of Commons, and something more, the future of parliamentary government. All these things are embodied in the person of the Speaker. I think I can sum it up in this way: he is one of us, he is part of us, but he is apart from us. I believe that, if elected, the hon. member for St. Paul's, Mr. Roland Michener, will preside over the deliberations of this house in the tradition of the most illustrious of his predecessors who have occupied the most exalted position that it is possible for the House of Commons to confer.

I am most happy, therefore, to place in nomination, and I now so move—I am happy because this motion will be joined in by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Pearson):

That Roland Michener, Esquire, member for the electoral district of St. Paul's, do take the chair of this house as Speaker of this twenty-fourth parliament of Canada.

**Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Raymond, I hope the Prime Minister will not draw any wrong conclusions as to my subsequent behaviour in this house if I tell him that my first words—and I am speaking not only on behalf of myself but on behalf of the official opposition—must be in hearty and complete agreement with what he has just said. I am indeed happy to second the nomination of Mr. Michener, the member for St. Paul's, to be our Speaker.

The Speaker is not only the servant but the first member of the commons. He is the protector of its rights and its privileges. He is the arbiter of our parliamentary problems and the composer of our procedural difficulties. As has so often been said in this house, it is an office with an old and fine tradition which we have inherited—as we have inherited so many good things—from the mother of parliaments at Westminster. As the Prime Minister has said, it is a position that requires tact, firmness, a sense of proportion and perhaps also a sense of humour. Above all, it requires fairness. The hon. member for St. Paul's has already shown, Mr. Raymond, that he possesses these qualities in an exemplary degree. Some of us