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Monday, May 26, 2025

Speaker: The Honourable Francis Scarpaleggia



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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, May 26, 2025

The House met at 8 a.m.

Prayer

FIRST SESSION—45TH PARLIAMENT

● (0810)

[*English*]

The 44th Parliament having been dissolved by proclamation on Sunday, March 23, 2025, and writs having been issued and returned, a new Parliament was summoned to meet for the dispatch of business on Monday, May 26, 2025, and did accordingly meet on that day.

Monday, May 26, 2025

This being the day on which Parliament was convoked by proclamation of Her Excellency the Governor General of Canada for the dispatch of business, and the members of the House being assembled:

Eric Janse, Clerk of the House of Commons, read to the House a letter from the Administrative Secretary to the Governor General informing him that the Deputy Governor General would proceed to the Senate chamber today at eight o'clock to open the first session of the 45th Parliament of Canada.

A message was delivered by the Usher of the Black Rod as follows:

Honourable Members of the House of Commons:

It is the desire of the Right Honourable Deputy of Her Excellency the Governor General that this honourable House attend him immediately in the chamber of the Senate.

Accordingly, the House went up to the Senate chamber, where the Speaker of the Senate said:

Honourable Members of the Senate, Members of the House of Commons:

I have it in command to let you know that His Majesty the King does not see fit to declare the causes of his summoning the present Parliament of Canada until a Speaker of the House of Commons shall have been chosen, according to law; but tomorrow, Tuesday, May 27, at the hour of 10:15 a.m., His Majesty the King will declare the causes of his calling Parliament.

And the House being returned to the Commons chamber:

The Clerk of the House: Honourable members, pursuant to Standing Order 3, I invite Mr. Plamondon, member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak, to take the chair as the member presiding over the election of the Speaker.

cour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak, to take the chair as the member presiding over the election of the Speaker.

* * *

● (0845)

[*Translation*]

ELECTION OF SPEAKER

The Presiding Officer (Louis Plamondon): I want to congratulate everyone who won a seat. This is a meaningful thing to do at an important time. No one can enter here without wearing the mantle of democracy. That is what those who are present here are doing, and I want to commend them for that. I see that there are many new MPs.

Many of them seem young to me, and it is no doubt one of them who will beat my 41-year record. I want to give these younger members some advice that I have given before here in the House: It is very important to be able to manage your frustrations, because there will always be frustrating things about this job. Why am I not the one asking the question? Why was I not appointed as a minister? Why am I not a critic? However, frustration fades with time.

My second piece of advice for new members is to speak only when you have something intelligent to say. I am saying this in French because if I were to say it in English, members would need interpretation since I have a very thick accent. As members know, we have the best journalists in Canada here, and they only do interviews with good reason, so we need to be well prepared. One wrong word can sometimes change the course of a career.

I want to tell you a story I have shared with other members of Parliament. When I was first elected in 1984, it took a month and a half before we set foot in Parliament. As a new MP, I made three statements that contradicted my party's platform. After our first caucus meeting, an older senator asked me to come to his office. At the time, he seemed old to me, but I now believe that it is sometimes better to be of a certain age. I went to his office and he told me that the meeting would be very short. He told me to look at the magnificent stuffed fish that was mounted on the wall. The senator then said to me, "You see, young man, if that fish had kept its mouth shut, it would still be alive. It is pretty much the same in politics."

Election of Speaker

● (0850)

[English]

All members should have received by email last night the list of candidates for the speakership, the list of members who have withdrawn and the list of members who are ineligible as candidates. These lists are also available at the table and on ourcommons.ca. Members are to consult them before the vote.

[Translation]

Before proceeding, I would invite those members whose names are on the ballot but who do not wish to be considered for election to kindly rise and inform the Chair accordingly.

John Nater (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Mr. Chair, dean of the House of Commons, I am very pleased to see you presiding over the election of a Speaker for the seventh time, and I wish to inform you that I am withdrawing my name from the list of candidates.

[English]

Chris d'Entremont (Acadie—Annapolis, CPC): A good Speaker knows when to keep their speeches short.

Mr. Chair, I would ask you to withdraw my name from the ballot, please.

[Translation]

The Presiding Officer (Louis Plamondon): Further to those statements, the list of candidates is revised accordingly.

In all, there will be six candidates.

[English]

Pursuant to Standing Order 3.1, the House must proceed to the speeches from each candidate for the Speakership.

Notwithstanding any standing order, any usual procedure or any practice adopted by this House, and to help the newly elected members identify the candidates for the office of Speaker, I will recognize in alphabetical order each candidate by name and electoral district.

When the last candidate to address the House completes his or her speech, I will leave the chair for 30 minutes, after which members will proceed to the election of the Speaker.

I will now call upon Sean Casey, the hon. member for Charlottetown, to address the House for not more than five minutes.

[Translation]

Sean Casey (Charlottetown, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I wish to start by acknowledging that we are on the traditional, unceded territory of the Algonquin people, who have lived here for millennia. We recognize the enduring presence of first nations, Métis and Inuit peoples in this territory.

[English]

Decorum, civility and respect for Parliament and the office of the Speaker have declined at an accelerating pace over the last decade. From 2003 to 2017, not a single member of Parliament was asked to withdraw for disregarding the authority of the Speaker. Compare that to the last eight years, when nine members have been kicked out of the chamber for violating the rules of debate, refusing to

withdraw unparliamentary language, failing to apologize for their conduct and defying the Speaker. I have witnessed almost all of these incidents, and, frankly, there should have been more expulsions.

What is worse is that this lack of respect for Parliament has actually been used as ammunition to raise funds. Sadly, this demonstrates the current state of decorum. It is not okay. That is why I stand before you to offer my candidacy for the office of Speaker, and I do so with some degree of optimism.

● (0855)

[Translation]

We, the members, are the only ones who can restore respect for our institutions. Roughly one-third of the members in the House today are new. I assume that none of them campaigned on a promise to be the best heckler or to figure out how to insult or belittle other members, let alone the Speaker.

I have no doubt that they promised to passionately, vigorously and effectively represent the voices and values of their constituents and to remain focused on them rather than the next Instagram reel. Newly elected members have an important role to play in the reset that is needed to restore respect in the House and in the Speaker's office.

[English]

I also hold out hope for returning members in wanting a reset. After thousands of interactions with constituents during the course of the campaign, I cannot imagine that anyone held up the current state of civility in Parliament with pride. We owe Canadians a genuine effort to raise the bar in how we treat each other. A new session with so many new faces offers a fresh start and a real chance to lead by example.

If you agree that the conditions and the timing are right to make a meaningful change, then I offer my experience and approach to lead that reset.

[Translation]

Before entering into politics, I was a lawyer and businessman. As a litigator, I had a duty to uphold the administration of justice. Professional courtesy toward opposing counsel and zealous representation of my client were integral to that duty. Experience and mastery of procedural rules were essential to being effective. That career instilled in me the principles of fairness, structure and impartiality, which are essential qualities for the speakership.

I was first elected to Parliament in 2011. For four years, I was one of only two new members of the third party. After winning re-election in 2015, I was successively appointed parliamentary secretary for three different ministers. More recently, I chaired two standing committees.

I became an MP at 48 and have since focused on becoming bilingual. I obtained level C last year. I am extremely proud of that accomplishment.

[English]

I have served with four different Speakers and have learned what works and what does not. First, it is vitally important for the Speaker to set the tone early and rigorously. A collegial approach, cajoling repeat offenders, has proven ineffective. The current state of debate requires the consistent application of progressive discipline. I offer the experience, the tone and the temperament to deliver exactly that.

I would be honoured, with your support, to lead a collective effort to rebuild respect in Parliament.

[Translation]

The Presiding Officer (Louis Plamondon): I will now call upon Greg Fergus, the hon. member for Hull—Aylmer, to address the House for not more than five minutes.

Hon. Greg Fergus (Hull—Aylmer, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I recognize that we are gathered on the unceded traditional territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin people.

Since time immemorial, indigenous nations have gathered here to exchange ideas, share and work together. That is what Canadians expect of us here in the House of Commons. Today, a similar spirit brings us together. Some of us are here for the first time, while others have been here since 1984.

I was elected Speaker of the House during the second half of a minority Parliament. When I was elected, I promised to be a thoughtful and collaborative Speaker, who was at the service of parliamentarians.

[English]

In that Parliament, tempers ran high and co-operation was low. It was in that context that I learned the ropes of the job, often getting it right, and when I did not, putting in place measures to continually improve. To be frank, it would have been a difficult time for anyone in that role.

We find ourselves in a new minority Parliament. A new Parliament is a new beginning, but we do not have to start at the beginning. Although I continue to stand by my values of mutual respect between members, the business of Parliament must get done, with transparency, integrity and accountability and without gamesmanship. This is what Canadians expect from us.

In my first question period, I asked my colleagues to treat me like a new car: try not to get a dent on me on the first day. Well, I got one day. There are now a couple of dents, but I am still running. I am now a reliable car with experience. That is how I learned what all Speakers eventually discover: You do not become Speaker by just putting on the robes; you learn the role through experience.

[Translation]

Robes do not a Speaker make; it comes with experience. I already have that experience under my belt, and I want to put it to work for and to the benefit of the 45th Parliament.

Presiding over the debates of the House is the most visible part of the role. However, the Speaker's diplomatic role is just as important.

Election of Speaker

• (0900)

[English]

More than ever, Canada needs friendships around the world. From the early days of my Speakership, I insisted that Canada show solidarity with Ukraine, and I am proud to have organized an all-party parliamentary mission to Ukraine. During the long train ride into Ukraine under the cover of darkness with the protection of the Canadian Armed Forces, I was seated with my colleagues from the Conservatives, the Bloc, the NDP and the Liberals. Working together, we developed lasting friendships with the Ukrainians and strengthened their network of support in their time of need. This is another example of Parliament at its best.

[Translation]

It is more important than ever that Canada have strong friendships worldwide. I have forged friendships around the world to advance the interests of our Parliament. Among other things, this experience will contribute to the success of the G7 meeting that the Speaker of the House of Commons of Canada will host later this summer.

The Speaker plays another role right here. As CEO of more than 2,500 employees of the House of Commons, I support the services that underpin the rights and privileges of parliamentarians.

[English]

Under my speakership, money was well spent. We took steps never taken before. We started a new audit process. We implemented robust new security measures in and around Parliament Hill, in your constituencies, at your offices and at your homes. We did this so you and your family can feel safe while you do your job.

[Translation]

Given this wealth of experience, I am seeking your support for my re-election. I have the experience it takes to start making the necessary changes today.

[English]

This car has a few dents, but it also has character. The engine is strong, and I know the road. Let us go together.

[Translation]

The Presiding Officer (Louis Plamondon): I will now call upon Alexandra Mendès, the hon. member for Brossard—Saint-Lambert, to speak to the House for five minutes.

• (0905)

[English]

Alexandra Mendès (Brossard—Saint-Lambert, Lib.): Dear colleagues, I rise today to let my name stand to be your Speaker. I will try to be brief and to the point.

Election of Speaker

Unlike other colleagues, I did not spend the last few days on emails or phone calls asking for your support. This is mostly because, as some of you may know, I was diagnosed with cancer at the end of January, and I have been undergoing intense treatment ever since.

Thanks to a phenomenal team and the many volunteers who raised their hand to help me through the campaign, I find myself representing the citizens of Brossard—Saint-Lambert once more, and I could not be more grateful.

After a successful re-election, I wanted to ensure my health situation would allow me to stand for this role. I spent many hours reflecting on my next steps, both at a personal and at a professional level.

I wish to take this moment to thank many of you in this chamber who sent me messages of encouragement in the past weeks and months. From text messages to phone calls and emails, your heartfelt words meant a great deal to me during these challenging times.

[Translation]

My oncologist has stated in no uncertain terms that I would have no problem serving as Speaker of the House. I have experience; my five years as Assistant Deputy Speaker have taught me what it takes to provide members with an environment conducive to respectfully debating ideas in compliance with the standing orders agreed upon through successive parliaments. I am not here to stand against anyone. I am here because certain convictions have led me to believe that it is possible to approach our responsibilities as parliamentarians in a different manner.

[English]

I have never been a parliamentary secretary or a minister, nor have I held any government role. I have been a privileged backbencher, but a backbencher nonetheless.

[Translation]

We are 343 individuals selected from among 40 million Canadian citizens to legislate on matters pertaining to their present lives and, now more than ever, their future.

[English]

Some of those responsibilities include and depend on the constant quest for truthfulness and the common good. I also believe that one of our responsibilities is to find joy in the work we do. Loving what we do, this place where we do it and the people who help us do it is, for me, a fundamental aspect of a successful parliamentary life. It cannot, and it should not, be all about insults and accusations, about gotcha moments and questionable statements. This is the place where Canada's most important conversations should be held, where we seriously debate and humorously disagree.

[Translation]

The ability to find just the right words is an art that I admire, and so many of you, my colleagues, are amazing at it. Oratorical skill, combined with mutual respect and the most basic standards of politeness, are exactly what our debates should always reflect.

[English]

Holding the government to account is the essential element of parliamentary democracy. No government is immune to the necessary scrutiny of its proposed legislation or its management of the public accounts, but Canadians have told us time and time again that they expect us to do this with far more civility than they have seen in this place most days. Should I be given the honour of being elected to the role of the Chair, I would strive with all my might to bring dignity to our debates.

I believe in the rules and regulations that govern the House of Commons. I believe in the office of the Speaker, which oversees the functioning and administration of this place. I trust the Clerk and the table officers, who guide us and provide us with their knowledge and their independent analysis.

[Translation]

Dignity is a principle very close to my heart. No one in this House, parliamentarian or otherwise, should have their human dignity ignored. We must at least say thank you to the pages who bring us a glass of water or a lectern. We must acknowledge the monumental work done by the interpreters. We must recognize the delicate task that falls to the table officers. Finally, we must accept that, despite our differences, we are all here with the same goal in mind, which is to pass good laws.

[English]

Our predecessors fought hard for our rights as parliamentarians. It is our duty to uphold them with conviction and honour.

[Translation]

Finally, I offer my colleagues a 21st-century argument: Is it not time for a woman to be elected Speaker of the House of Commons of Canada?

● (0910)

The Presiding Officer (Louis Plamondon): I will now call upon Robert Oliphant, the hon. member for Don Valley West, to address the House for not more than five minutes.

Hon. Robert Oliphant (Don Valley West, Lib.): Mr. Chair, thank you for presiding with the expertise and sense of humour we have come to know. I think you have a promising career ahead of you.

I want to start by congratulating each and every member on their election, especially if it is their first win.

[English]

I remember when I was first elected. I walked into the chamber, which was then in Centre Block. It was in 2008. I am a minister of the United Church of Canada, so neo-Gothic buildings, the stained glass and the ceremony were hardly new, but I was still overwhelmed to be in the Parliament of Canada with honourable colleagues, from all parties, doing our best to live up to the lofty expectations of those who sent us here.

Election of Speaker

I still feel that sense of awe, but after 17 years, it has dimmed. It has become more difficult, and sometimes even painful, to be in here. Dignity has diminished, and decorum has declined. Respect for one another and this institution is woefully lacking.

Canadians have noticed. This was confirmed for me at the many doors I knocked on recently. I suspect that everyone in this room has had that experience in the same way. Canadians are watching.

[Translation]

That being said, knowing we have a colossal task ahead of us, it is with great humility and some trepidation that I have decided to put my name forward to become Speaker.

[English]

My first Speaker was the Hon. Peter Milliken. I did not know he would be in the gallery today. For me, he embodied what it means to be a parliamentarian. I was in opposition, and in a moment of passion, I once went a little too far with a comment. Speaker Milliken rose. He then dropped his head, raised his eyebrow and asked me to withdraw the comment. I am a politician. I love debate. I love spice in the House, but I felt, at that moment, that I had disappointed the Speaker. I had disappointed him. I withdrew the remark, as I did not want to let down my colleagues in the House or the people who had sent me here to represent them. It was the raising of an eyebrow.

I say this because the Speaker's authority, the ability to provide leadership, maintain order, protect members' rights and privileges, and have credibility inside and outside of the House, comes from members having trust and respect in not only the office of the Speaker but also the Speaker herself or himself.

[Translation]

It takes more than just the appearance of impartiality. The Speaker must be truly impartial. They need to have served on both sides of the House and held several roles. They must be familiar with the kind of pressure that members face, regardless of their party or position. The authority of Speaker cannot be given to a person just because they understand parliamentary privilege. They must uphold that privilege every day.

[English]

Authority is, of course, rooted in competence, credentials and character, but it is more than that. It comes from being calm in the midst of chaos and dispassionate in the heat of debate. It comes from humility, accountability and empathy. It comes from having a sense of humour that cuts through pretense and posturing, and calms the moment.

[Translation]

A Speaker should not be elected just because they respect both official languages but because they live in both of those languages every day. My partner of 33 years is a proud Quebecker who was born and raised in Rimouski. Not only does he teach me French, but he also helps me understand what an asset the French fact in Canada is for all of us.

• (0915)

[English]

As a parliamentarian, I hope to preside over Parliament with dignity, and I will say, zero tolerance for behaviour that diminishes any one of us with consistently applied consequences for unparliamentary behaviour, no matter where it comes from. As a former accountant, I hope to excel as a chief administrator of this place. As former parliamentary secretary to the the minister of foreign affairs, I hope to represent Parliament faithfully and carefully around the world and in Canada. I believe I can do all three of these key roles.

In my role as another kind of minister, I led congregations across Canada, leading people in good times and bad, breaking down barriers that divided people and attempting to lead them in common purpose. People have often asked what the difference is between being an MP and clergy. I pray more now.

However, I do not want to pray. I want to do something about it. I would like to be your Speaker. I would like to be the custodian of the chair that belongs you.

[Translation]

Thank you in advance for your support.

The Presiding Officer (Louis Plamondon): You mentioned my career. When I was elected back in 1984, there were no cellphones, no Internet, no fax machines. It was heaven.

I now invite Sherry Romanado, the hon. member of Parliament for Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne, to speak for up to five minutes.

Sherry Romanado (Longueuil—Charles-LeMoyne, Lib.): Mr. Chair, it is with humility and deep respect that I am putting my name forward today as a candidate for Speaker of the House of Commons.

To those members who are returning to the House, welcome back. It is wonderful to see so many familiar faces. To those newly elected, I extend a warm welcome. Each of us has earned the trust of our constituents and has a responsibility to represent the diverse voices of Canadians. Regardless of our party, region or perspective, we are united in our shared duty to serve our democracy with integrity and to uphold the institutions that sustain it.

It is no small matter to have the honour of presiding over the House of Commons, where these diverse voices come together, sometimes loudly, often passionately, to shape the course of our country. The Speaker has a solemn responsibility to preserve the dignity of Parliament, ensure fairness in debate and, perhaps most difficult of all, keep 343 highly intelligent and opinionated people somewhat on schedule.

Election of Speaker

The Speaker's role is non-partisan and founded on principles. It demands fairness and an unwavering commitment to protecting the rights and privileges of each member of Parliament. If I secure the support of this House, I pledge to treat all members equally, respectfully and impartially, because I know that democracy flourishes not when everyone agrees, but when everyone feels that their voice have been heard.

[English]

I bring nearly 10 years of parliamentary experience as a parliamentary secretary, deputy leader of the government, chair of the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, and probably the only member who actually asked to sit on the procedure and House affairs committee.

As a fellow elected representative, I understand the demands of public service and the pressures we all face, but I also believe that impassioned debate and decorum are not mutually exclusive. The Speaker fulfills several key responsibilities: presiding over debates and ensuring the enforcement of rules and the preservation of order and decorum, acting as chief administrative officer of the House and representing the House in its external relations. Of these, the one I have heard the most about in my conversations over the past weeks is the preservation of decorum. On this, let me be very clear. I will be fair, firm and consistent.

The Standing Orders and *House of Commons Procedure and Practice* offer a solid framework to guide our work, and with nearly a third of members joining the House for the first time, it is especially important that the Speaker provide guidance, clarity and support. Expectations must be clearly communicated, and when rules are not followed, corrective action must be taken. In this regard, I have demonstrated my ability to lead impartially and keep order as the chair of the INDU committee.

My two sons will attest to my near obsession with rules and order. In fact, they both voluntarily enrolled in the Canadian Armed Forces at age 16, believing that even the military was bound to have fewer rules than we had at home.

Above and beyond rules, the tone and culture of this place matter. In these times of uncertainty, when trust in institutions is being tested, we must renew our commitment to civility, transparency and respectful dialogue. Canadians are watching us, especially young Canadians. Our children and grandchildren are paying attention to how we speak to one another, how we handle disagreement and how we uphold the principles of democracy. Let us give them something to be proud of.

• (0920)

[Translation]

I also believe in a modern, accessible Parliament that embraces new technologies, reflects the realities of Canadians and combines tradition with innovation. Parliament must evolve to adapt to the present, while preserving a foundation that has served us well for generations.

[English]

To put it plainly, I do not see the role of Speaker as a one-way street. It must be one that encourages a constant flow of ideas,

viewpoints and suggestions on how we can make this institution stronger to work better for all members, which is ultimately for the people we are all here to serve. This is, after all, their House.

[Translation]

I have a vision of Parliament as a place that reflects the best of what we are as Canadians and what we stand for as parliamentarians.

If I have the honour of serving as Speaker, I will dedicate myself wholeheartedly to this mission. I will be fair, firm and consistent to ensure that the House is strong, dignified and inclusive.

[English]

The Presiding Officer (Louis Plamondon): I will now call upon Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia, the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Louis.

[Translation]

Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Mr. Chair, I too would like to acknowledge that we are gathered today on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinabe people.

A little over 20 years ago, I took my seat in this House for the first time, in the very last row, in fact.

[English]

I took my seat in the House a little over 20 years ago. It was a proud moment, which is why I would like to offer a special congratulation to all the newly elected members who are taking their seats for the first time today. Whether we are in the first row or the last row, like the old Montreal Forum, there are no bad seats in this arena.

We are all equal here. We have all travelled the same road, faced challenges and come up against obstacles on the way to earning the honour and privilege of being the voices of our constituents in this Parliament. Canada's greatest asset is its democracy, and democracy lives and breathes here in this chamber.

[Translation]

Democracy does not end on election day. It is a living thing, and its home is here in this chamber. Ultimately, it is the quality of our democracy that makes our country strong. It reflects the strength of the nations, communities, provinces and regions that make up Canadian society.

[English]

It is rightly said that there can be no true freedom without order. Likewise, we cannot have a truly meaningful exchange of ideas without an orderly, rules-based House of Commons. There is nothing wrong with a clean, even board-rattling, polemical body check in the corners. I have been at the receiving end of a few. Robust debate is fundamental to a robust democracy, and a robust democracy is what makes for a resilient nation. The problem is when sticks go high.

Some hon. members: Elbows.

Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): The elbows are for others, not for us.

Canadians want to see sticks on the ice, and it is the responsibility of the Speaker to make this so. I am an optimist; I believe it possible to skilfully and convincingly dissect and refute an argument without recourse to personal invective or intimidation. I have seen all colleagues from all parties achieve this standard.

More than 20 years of parliamentary experience has prepared me for the challenge of finding the right balance between respect and order on the one hand and vigorous debate that clarifies the issues on the other.

● (0925)

[Translation]

I have been around the block. Over the past 20 years, I have sat on both sides of the House. I sat on the opposition benches for 10 years, including when my party's future seemed rather uncertain. I have also sat for a total of 10 years on the government benches. I know both sides of the coin and am sensitive to the needs of colleagues on both sides of the House.

It is important to remember that the Speaker is also an administrator, overseeing the operations and services of the parliamentary precinct. My 20 years have given me a thorough understanding of the workings of the administrative apparatus on Parliament Hill and its regulatory framework.

[English]

We have a duty to Canadians and to ourselves, a duty to cultivate our parliamentary democracy in an increasingly turbulent world where many argue that democracy is just too inefficient and time-consuming.

Canada has always been about values. It was the will to affirm a distinct set of values on the upper half of the North American continent that led to the creation, against all odds, of this confederation of founding peoples and nations, and diverse and proud regions. While our neighbour to the south may be modern-day Rome in size and power, we are Athens in culture, values and democracy. That is how we must see ourselves. That is who we must be.

SITTING SUSPENDED

The Presiding Officer (Louis Plamondon): I will soon suspend the sitting for 30 minutes.

[Translation]

Before I do that, I would like to thank my entire team of volunteers for helping me get elected for the 13th time. I thank them for this exalted throne. I also want to thank my whole family. I do love this throne, but I will have to let the King borrow it tomorrow. The King is welcome to it. Actually, he will be sitting on the throne in the Senate.

I wish to remind hon. members that the bells to call the members back to the House will be sounded for not more than five minutes.

The sitting is suspended to the call of the Chair.

Election of Speaker

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 9:28 a.m.)

● (0955)

SITTING RESUMED

(The House resumed at 9:58 a.m.)

The Presiding Officer (Louis Plamondon): Pursuant to the Standing Orders, the House will now proceed to elect a Speaker.

● (1000)

[English]

After the Clerk has opened the envelope containing the ballots, I will suggest a method of proceeding that will help accelerate the voting process.

[Translation]

We will now begin to vote pursuant to Standing Order 4.

[English]

Please allow me to outline the procedure for all hon. members.

The names of the candidates for the election are listed on the ballot in alphabetical order. To vote, you must rank the candidates in order of preference, placing the number “1” in the space next to your first-choice candidate, the number “2” next to your second-choice candidate, and so on, until you have ranked all candidates for whom you wish to vote. Please note that it is not necessary to rank all candidates.

[Translation]

Members can vote for a single candidate, if they so desire. In order to vote, I will ask that members leave their desks, exit through the curtains and come to the table using the doors behind me on the left and right sides of the chair on their respective sides of the House. The clerk will issue a ballot paper to each member. After casting their ballots, members are asked to leave the voting area.

The polling booths on both sides are now open for voting.

(Members were issued ballots and marked their ballots in secret at voting stations)

● (1035)

[English]

The Presiding Officer (Louis Plamondon): All members having voted, I do now instruct the Clerk to proceed with the counting of the ballots after I have cast my ballot.

● (1040)

[Translation]

SITTING SUSPENDED

The Presiding Officer (Louis Plamondon): I want to remind my colleagues of something I forgot to mention, especially for the benefit of new members. When people are elected, they expect a lot of recognition. Politics is not the place to look for recognition. As a former Quebec premier once told a reporter, people who get into politics looking for recognition would be better off going and buying themselves a nice dog.

Election of Speaker

Before I suspend the sitting, I wish to inform hon. members that when the counting of the ballots has been completed, the bells to call the members back to the House will be sounded.

The sitting is suspended to the call of the Chair.

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 10:41 a.m.)

• (1150)

[English]

SITTING RESUMED

(The House resumed at 11:53 a.m.)

(The Clerk of the House having provided the Presiding Officer with the name of the member having received a majority of the votes cast:)

The Presiding Officer (Louis Plamondon): It is my duty to inform the House that a Speaker of this House has been duly elected.

It is with great pleasure that I do now invite the hon. member for the electoral district of Lac-Saint-Louis to take the chair.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear!

(The Presiding Officer having vacated the chair, and the mace having been laid under the table, the right hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Leader of the Opposition conducted Francis Scarpaleggia from his seat in the House to the chair)

• (1155)

[Translation]

The Speaker: Hon. members, I humbly thank the House for the great honour it has bestowed on me by choosing me as Speaker. I sincerely thank members for their confidence.

On behalf of everyone here, I want to thank the dean of the House, the member for Bécancour—Nicolet—Saurel—Alnôbak. I thank him for his knowledge, his humour and his perspective as an experienced parliamentarian.

I also want to congratulate my colleagues who were candidates in today's vote. I congratulate them on their inspiring and edifying speeches that made us all proud to say that we are members of the House.

[English]

I would also like to reserve a special mention and thanks to the member for Hull—Aylmer, who took the reins of the Speakership at a difficult moment, at the end of a mandate, when things tend to get a little feistier.

I would remind members that we are at the beginning of a mandate, in the selfish hope that they will afford me a little grace period.

Once again, thank you for your confidence. I have few words, because we all have things we want to accomplish, and we have been away. Thank you, colleagues.

And the mace having been laid upon the table:

• (1200)

Right Hon. Mark Carney (Prime Minister, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I rise in this House for the first time, I hope you will permit me to thank my constituents in Nepean for the great honour of being a member of this chamber. I would also like to thank Canadians for the trust they have put in this government and in all members of this great House.

[Translation]

Your election to the chair is a testament to the level of respect your colleagues have for you. For more than 20 years, you have served the people of Lac-Saint-Louis with devotion, wisdom, poise and dignity. Thank you.

[English]

I have much to learn from the members of this great House. I will make mistakes. I have no doubt that you, Mr. Speaker, will call them out, and for good reason, because this House has rules and traditions, and it is on those traditions that our Athenian democracy is founded. Yes, we are Athens, and they are Rome.

[Translation]

We will prevail. It is the golden age of Athens.

[English]

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You have my support.

[Translation]

Hon. Andrew Scheer (Leader of the Opposition, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by congratulating you. You have earned members' support to manage the House for the next few months or years. We will see.

[English]

I too would like to indulge myself and take this opportunity to thank the voters of Regina—Qu'Appelle, and indeed my spouse. I would like to thank my wife Jill for the sacrifice that she and my family make, as all our spouses and significant others do.

Mr. Speaker, you have just taken charge of an office that is almost as old as Parliament itself. It emerged in the Middle Ages when the commons needed a spokesman to air its grievances to the king, a task that probably would not stand up to the safe workplace guidelines that exist today. As we know, until the 17th century, the Speaker's loyalty was to the Crown rather than to MPs, and they were often blamed if they delivered bad news to the monarch. Seven Speakers were beheaded between 1394 and 1535, and many more were imprisoned. Managing monarchs was a delicate undertaking.

One Speaker, John Wenlock, during the Wars of the Roses, when no one could be sure who would end up as king, tried to hedge his bets by fighting for both the York family and the Lancastrians. It did not work out too well for him, though: He died at the Battle of Tewkesbury. Of course, he was not the last politician to try to be on both sides of a contentious issue. I dare say we may find some Liberal MPs voting for things that they were very recently voting against.

Gradually, the Speaker's role became one of representing Parliament rather than the monarch, and it was not until the Victorian era that impartiality of the Speaker became the norm. It might no longer be a requirement to stand up to kings and queens, but you may find yourself having to stand up to other offices of authority. If such a moment presents itself, we trust that you will stand with the Speakers who came before you who defended this institution on behalf of the people.

As I look back over the last few parliaments, we did have some trying times. We witnessed injuries from flying elbows, F-bombs dropped and a few appearances of one member in a state of undress. I did hear that CPAC was considering putting "May contain violence, coarse language and nudity" as a warning on the daily broadcast, but so far it has not had to do that.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Andrew Scheer: Mr. Speaker, the speakership itself has been tested, unfortunately with some Speakers caught in the middle of scandals themselves. I have heard it said that it has all gone downhill since the last time a Conservative was elected Speaker, but I could not possibly comment on that.

In all seriousness, you are not a commissioner of Parliament but a servant of the House, and that is an important dynamic. You are held accountable by members, and each of us is accountable to our voters. Debates should be passionate; they should be lively. The lives of Canadians are changed by the decisions we make, so it is normal that members get enthusiastic and fiery. When the stakes are so high, often the best thing you can do is allow the players to play a little.

This is where the government is held to account. It has an enormous amount of power, and we parliamentarians must provide ruthless scrutiny on every dollar taken out of the pockets of Canadians, every infringement on their liberties and every single decision the government makes. Of course, every Parliament has its own unique challenges and messy moments, but as Winston Churchill said, "democracy is the worst form of Government except all those other forms that have been tried".

• (1205)

Mr. Speaker, we offer you our support and our best wishes for your speakership over this Parliament.

[Translation]

Yves-François Blanchet (Beloeil—Chambly, BQ): Mr. Speaker, esteemed colleagues, I cannot help but notice that I am speaking from a seat a little further back in the House. That means that, while we will still be just as courteous, we will have to speak even louder so that, when the time comes, we can show that numbers are not everything.

On behalf of myself and the Bloc Québécois, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the new Speaker and to thank the voters who participated in this democratic exercise, both in my riding of Beloeil—Chambly and across Quebec and Canada.

I want to point out that the Prime Minister referred to Athenian institutions and that the Leader of the Opposition spoke a lot about

Election of Speaker

the monarchy. I would have expected the opposite, but we will come back to that, perhaps tomorrow.

I would also like to extend my best wishes to the entire House in anticipation of what we hope will be serious work under the watchful eye of our new Speaker. I hope that this Parliament will take a more collaborative approach. That would be good for us, it would be good for all the members here in the House, and it is a highly responsible approach. I would like to ask all members, both new and old, to be the best colleagues they can be so that the Bloc Québécois will be compelled to be even better and be the best colleagues we can be. Of course, we will be focusing on our priorities in the coming days, and our colleagues know what those are.

In particular, I want us all to reflect on the importance and privilege of democracy. I believe we need to get voters engaged again so that, in the future, they will vote for something they really want, motivated by enthusiasm and hope, and not so much by concern, apprehension or fear.

I believe we have the potential to achieve this, because in the last few minutes, and to some extent in the last few weeks, I have had a chance to speak with a number of you. Even then, especially during my brief conversations with the Prime Minister and with Conservative colleagues, I sensed that we have it in us to change our tone and the way we collaborate. That seems to me like the only path forward to regaining the respect of the voters who selected the members of this Parliament.

Above all, I hope that we can accomplish this work with good humour and enjoyment. Our work arises from an incredible privilege that you, Mr. Speaker, will be called upon to protect. I offer you my sincere congratulations.

• (1210)

[English]

Don Davies (Vancouver Kingsway, NDP): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the New Democratic Party of Canada, I wish to offer most sincere congratulations on your election as Speaker of the House of Commons.

[Translation]

Please accept our sincerest congratulations.

[English]

I also wish to thank all those who ran for the position and to congratulate all returning and newly elected members of Parliament. We have a privileged position in the House.

The role of the Speaker is foundational to the functioning of our parliamentary democracy. As the impartial guardian of the House, the Speaker ensures that debate is conducted with decorum, that all voices are heard and that the rules of Parliament are upheld with fairness and integrity. At a time when public trust in democratic institutions is being tested around the world, the Speaker's duty is to foster respectful dialogue and uphold the dignity of the House. That has never been more important.

Opening of Parliament

I think we all know that Canadians are facing some of the most difficult times in recent memory. An entrenched housing crisis, rising economic uncertainty and widespread difficulty accessing timely health care are putting immense pressures on families and communities across the country. In addition to these challenges, we now face unprecedented threats to our independence, and a trade war from the administration south of the border.

Despite these daunting circumstances, Canadians have responded with resilience, compassion and unity. They have demonstrated what it means to come together in times of adversity. I think there is a lesson there for all of us. In keeping with the Athenian imagery, I would say that the House should have more Plato and less Mediocrates.

May the House draw inspiration from Canadians' examples. While we may hold very different views on how best to address the pressing issues, we must not lose sight of our shared responsibility to work together in common purpose to defend the best interests of our country and the welfare of our citizens. Canadian voters have once again elected a minority Parliament, a clear mandate for co-operation rather than constant conflict. They have asked us to listen to one another, to find common ground and to deliver real solutions. No party holds a monopoly on good ideas, and no government is entitled to a blank cheque. Let us honour the trust that Canadians have placed in us by rising to this moment and working together to build a more just, secure and hopeful future for us all.

I am confident that you, Mr. Speaker, will preside over the House with wisdom, impartiality and a steady hand. Canada's New Democrats extend our support and best wishes as you embark on this important chapter of public service.

• (1215)

[*Translation*]

Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, congratulations to one and all, especially to the new members.

[*English*]

It is an honour to rise to congratulate our new Speaker and to congratulate all the members elected in this place, whether for the first time or, as for the dean of the House, the 13th time. I congratulate, again, every member.

I reflect on what it was like when I witnessed my first Speaker election, when I was first elected. We elected the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle. I will never forget that the leader of the official opposition at the time, the late Jack Layton, stood on that occasion and said, and I commend this to the official opposition, that his caucus would never heckle. That was a wonderful moment.

As I stood then on behalf of the entire Green caucus, I do also today. I pledge again never to heckle, and to do everything possible to aid your work, Mr. Speaker, in protecting our rights and ensuring the effective, efficient and honourable conduct of this place, such that there will be no need for warnings on CPAC or any other network. Again, I urge everyone here to try our very best.

I pause briefly to congratulate the Prime Minister on his maiden speech and, again, on brevity. We look forward to more speeches from our Prime Minister, from the leader of the official opposition and from members of all parties, whether recognized or unrecognized. We are all here for the same reason. We work for Canada. We work for our constituents. With your wise counsel, Mr. Speaker, we will work hard to make this a Parliament in which Canadians can be justifiably proud of Canadian democracy.

* * *

TRAGEDY AT VANCOUVER FESTIVAL

The Speaker: Following discussions among representatives of all parties in the House, I understand that there is an agreement to observe a moment of silence following the tragic event that occurred on April 26 at the Lapu Lapu festival in Vancouver, British Columbia.

I now invite hon. members to rise.

[*A moment of silence observed*]

* * *

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT

The Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that I have received the following message:

May 26, 2025

Mr. Speaker:

I have the honour to inform you that His Majesty the King will arrive at the Senate of Canada Building at 10:15 a.m. on Tuesday, the 27th day of May, 2025.

When it has been indicated that all is in readiness, His Majesty the King will proceed to the Chamber of the Senate to formally open the First Session of the Forty-Fifth Parliament of Canada.

Sincerely yours,

Donald C. Booth

Canadian Secretary to the King

The House now stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., at which time the House will proceed to the Senate where His Majesty the King will open the first session of the 45th Parliament.

(The House adjourned at 12:20 p.m.)

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