

MR. SPEAKER : Will the hon. Member please sit down? Instead of pressing it again and again, it is enough if he draws my attention to it once. I shall look into the proceedings ..

SHRI SEZHIYAN : Yesterday it was conceded.

MR. SPEAKER : I shall look into the proceedings

12.31 hrs.

ELECTION OF DEPUTY-SPEAKER

श्री तेन्नेटी विश्वनाथम (विशाखापतनम्) :
पूज्य अध्यक्ष जी, मैं प्रस्ताव करता हूँ कि श्री जी० जी० स्वेल, जो इस सभा के सदस्य है, को इस सभा का उपाध्यक्ष चुना जाये।

SHRI N. C. CHATTERJEE (Burdwan) :
I beg to second this motion.

MR. SPEAKER : Motion moved :

"That Shri G. G. Swell, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Deputy-Speaker of this House."

I think I should put this motion before the House to vote. Is there any other motion?

SHRI NAMBIAR (Tiruchirappalli) :
Some other Members also want to move the same motion.

SHRI P. RAMAMURTI (Madurai) : It is not necessary.

MR. SPEAKER : The other Members also want to move the same motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS : It is not necessary.

MR. SPEAKER : There is only one candidate proposed. But the procedure will have to be gone through. It will have to be put to vote.

The question is :

"That Shri G. G. Swell, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Deputy-Speaker of this House."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI RANDHIR SINGH (Rohtak) :
There are no 'Noes', There is nobody against the motion.

MR. SPEAKER : So, the motion is carried unanimously. I declare Prof. G. G. Swell elected as Deputy-Speaker.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur) :
May I request you that this decision of the House may be communicated to the Sangh-Swatantra-Syndicate Members who are either in the Lobby or in the Central Hall?

MR. SPEAKER : The hon. Member may take up that responsibility on himself.

THE PRIME MINISTER, MINISTER OF FINANCE, MINISTER OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND MINISTER OF PLANNING (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) :
May I, on behalf of this august House and on my personal behalf, offer our sincere congratulations to Prof. Swell on his election to the office of Deputy-Speaker, which is next in importance, in this House, only to your own high office.

Prof. Swell is not a stranger to us or to this House. He has been a distinguished Member since 1962 and many hon. Members will agree that he is amongst those effective Parliamentarians who made their mark almost from the beginning of their association with Parliament.

Prof. Swell is also amongst those for whom Politics has not been the only field of interest, certainly not an obsession. His reputation as a professor and a man of letters is well known.

If I may say so Sir, in spite of his relatively youthful 45 years he carries a wise head on his shoulders. We value his gentleness, sobriety and the larger vision which he brings to bear on his observations here in this House. We are confident that Prof. Swell will bring dignity to the Chair which he will occupy and that he will conduct the not-so easy proceedings of this House with fairness and absolute impartiality as well as the requisite degree of firmness.

We have elected Prof. Swell as an able Indian, but we do take special satisfaction from the fortunate circumstance that he is also an illustrious member of the tribal communities which are important and

valuable constituents of the great Indian people.

We should like to congratulate him again, and to extend to him an assurance of our full co-operation and also our best wishes for success in the arduous duties upon which he is about to embark.

SHRI SEZHIYAN (Kumbakonam) : On behalf of my party and on behalf of my own self, I offer my felicitations to Prof. G. G. Swell on his unanimous election to this august office of Deputy-Speaker.

As a professor and as a scholar he has had a very distinguished academic career, and as a keen parliamentarian he has endeared himself to those who have come in touch with him for the past seven years. I wish him well in his new office.

His election also endorses the secular character of our democracy and also the respect we pay and in which we hold all the minority communities in this country. Even apart from that, he is distinguished himself by himself and he is eminently suited for the post that he is going to take over.

On behalf of my party, I offer him all the confidence and co-operation that he deserves in that post.

I hope even those Opposition Parties who have abstained themselves will come, stay on and co-operate with us, the Deputy-Speaker and yourself in the conduct of affairs of this House.

Once again, I offer felicitations on behalf of my Party and on my own behalf to the distinguished Prof. Swell on his elevation to the office of Deputy-Speaker.

SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE (Calcutta North-East) : Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my Party and of myself, I offer felicitations to our friend and colleague, Prof. Swell, for the honour which has been conferred upon him by the House.

It is rather disconcerting to notice that a large section of the Opposition has chosen, for reasons into which I need not go, to stay away from the proceeding of this morning in so far as the election of a very distinguished colleague of ours to a very high office was concerned. I do not wish to discuss this matter, but I would

leave them to their idea of parliamentary manners.

I am glad that a member of the Opposition has now become the Deputy-Speaker of this House. This is not the first occasion that a member of the Opposition has been elevated to that position, because I remember that in the latter part of the first Lok Sabha when Sardar Hukam Singh was elected as the Deputy-Speaker, he was a member of the Opposition. I hope as a matter of fact, I am confident that what happened in the case of Sardar Hukam Singh, who after a while crossed over to the Government Party, would not happen in the case of Prof. Swell. I say this because we have noticed in Prof. Swell not only eloquence of an order which it is difficult not to appreciate but sophistication of a particular category, and I am sure that that quality of sophistication would stand in the way of his taking recourse to any action which would even remotely be liable to accusation as an act of political impropriety.

He has been elected as the Deputy-Speaker of this House as a member of the Opposition and it is on that account in particular that we on this side of the House would have our expectations geared to a particular level.

I have already been said by the Prime Minister and my hon. friend, Shri Sezhiyan, that there is a special significance in the fact that Prof. Swell hails from a particular part of our country and from a particular segment of our people. Assam is a lovely land and the hill areas thereof are an element in our multi-faceted India which we wish to cherish. But we know how the hill people have never been made to feel as if they belong with the rest of ourselves, and I do hope that on this occasion the election of Prof. Swell, who comes from the Khasi area of Assam, would contribute to the task of national integration at least in so far as the tribal population of our country is concerned.

I would not amplify on the many virtues of Prof. Swell. We have come to look upon him as a friend and colleague whom we have always cherished and it is a great pleasure to us that he is now to function from the high office to which he has been elected.

[Shri H. N. Mukerjee]

I repeat my felicitations and the felicitations of my Party for Prof. Swell.

SHRI P. RAMAMURTI (Madurai) : Mr. Speaker, I wish to add my own felicitations and those of my Party to Prof. Swell for this unanimous election.

I have had occasion to move with Prof. Swell rather intimately during the last 2½ years of my life in this Lok Sabha. I do not know much about his professorship and all that kind of thing, but I know that on problems which I had occasion to discuss with him, particularly tribal problems, I have found in him a very broad vision, an outlook which wants to integrate the tribal population with the rest of the country, and at the same time tries to persuade the other people, the other Members of the House, as well as people who do not belong to the tribal areas, on the problems from which they are suffering and the difficulties from which they are suffering, and also ask them to appreciate how exactly this thing has got to be done. I have found a large amount of unanimity of views as far as this question is concerned, with him.

Above all, Mr. Swell is an amiable gentleman. My only difficulty with him is, he may be too good a gentleman that I do not know how he is going to manage this House. But I hope—as my friend Mr. Sezhiyan has said—that this other people will also come here and co-operate; they will have to come here. I know that they are not boycotting the House permanently. I know that they are not going to boycott this House whenever Mr. Swell happens to be in the Chair; in that case, the House will be a wash-out of many Members for almost half the day. But it will not happen, I know. But I hope that the impartiality which Prof. Swell brings to bear on the problems coming up for decision by the Chair whenever he is the occupant of the Chair, will be such that even those people who have chosen to absent themselves will later on have a second thought on the wisdom of their remaining outside this House and they will regret the action that they have taken. Therefore, I offer my co-operation to him, the co-operation of my party, and I am sure that he will be able to discharge his responsibilities.

SHRI N. C. CHATTERJEE (Burdwan) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a great joy both for

my Independent Parliamentary Group and myself to offer my felicitations to Mr Swell on his unanimous election to the post of Deputy-Speaker in the Lok Sabha. Sir it is a historic occasion; I deliberately say it is a historic occasion, because Mr. Swell has made history. Just look at his age and you know for the first time an Opposition Member has been unanimously elected as Deputy-Speaker of this House. Secondly, he belongs to an important minority community; that is very important, and he has won a seat without any opposition. Thirdly, he comes from one corner of this great country, a neglected corner it may be; but still that will help us in the integration of India. Therefore, I offer my felicitations and congratulations to him. I have no doubt that Mr. Swell as Deputy-Speaker will carry on his duties with objectivity and with complete impartiality.

Sir, I want to tell you today that there is absolutely no force in the charge that there has been anything improper or strategic or any manoeuvring so far as this Parliamentary Independent Group is concerned to which Mr. Swell belongs and I have the honour to belong and to which Mr. Frank Anthony belongs. Mr. Anthony and myself had called on the Prime Minister and we had a talk with her, but I ought to tell you today that there is no question of any manoeuvring; there is no question of any strategy; there is no question of any stratagem. There is no question of any *quid pro quo*. I know Mr. Swell is not the man to submit himself to any kind of *quid pro quo* or to demand any give and take in this matter. It is a great day and a historic occasion; when you are going to pass an amendment of the Constitution, for the benefit of the minorities, it is very desirable that we have elected Mr. Swell, who is an Independent Member, to the post of Deputy-Speaker.

I ought to tell you and through you the whole country that there is absolutely no truth in the charge that between the Prime Minister and us there has been anything improper or any manoeuvring or any strategy of any kind whatsoever. I am quite sure, whenever Mr. Swell sits in the Chair, he will make no difference between any Member of the Opposition and the Prime Minister, and everybody will have the satisfaction of knowing that justice is being done without any demur and without any trouble.

I offer my heartiest felicitations to Mr. Swell.

SHRI FRANK ANTHONY (Nominated-Anglo-Indians): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Mr. Chatterjee has already expressed the gratification of the members of the United Independent Parliamentary Group on the unanimous election of Mr. Swell. I felt I might add a few words, because Mr. Chatterjee has mentioned that there was a suggestion of any planning or deliberation between the group and the Government in respect of Mr. Swell's candidature. The whole thing was in fluid condition. Several names were suggested. Mr. Swell's was not the first name suggested by some of us independents. There were other names also. Ultimately, when of the senior members of the group—the group is fortunate because we have some of the oldest and, if I may say so, the ablest hands in this House in our group—when some of the senior members categorically proposed and seconded him, then we said, as a member of our group, we were bound to support him: It was only after that that the Prime Minister asked to see some of us. But when we went there, we sat quietly. The Prime Minister sat quietly. She cleared her throat. We cleared our throats. We said, "Madam, why have we come?" She said, "I just wanted to see you." Mr. Chatterjee immediately plunged into a long discussion about statues. Before coming away, I said, "Mr. Swell is here. I may tell you that we have formally committed ourselves to supporting him." Then the Prime Minister said, "Yes; we also think he is a good candidate. We believe we will support him." There was an end of the matter. But before that, there was no suggestion of our meeting with anybody to discuss the matter.

I only want to say this. Some of us have known Prof. Swell for many years. He has been an increasingly valued member of our group. I am sorry that we should be losing him, because he was one of the few members of the group who could make themselves felt, because he had a certain natural lung capacity. Now that will be an invaluable qualification as Deputy-Speaker. But as the Prime Minister has pointed out, Dr. Swell has never been merely a narrow politician. He has certain other accomplishments, academic and other. I hope, what

Mr. Ramamurti said is not too true that apart from his academic qualifications, which do not seem to count too much among some people here, he has also got what is a disqualification—he is inclined to be a gentleman. Dr. Swell is very much a gentleman. I am sure, given or good wishes which he has and the co-operation of every section of the House which I hope he will have, he will prove a very competent and respected Deputy-Speaker.

We congratulate him and I wish him well.

May God bless him!

SHRI M. MUHAMMAD ISMAIL (Manjeri): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have to thank you for enabling me to add any felicitations also to those that have been offered to Dr. Swell, who has been elected to the high post of Deputy-Speaker of this August House.

In every respect he is well-suited for the high office which he has been called upon to occupy. As has already been pointed out, he is a man of letters, of good temper, sanity and sobriety and also a man endowed with ample intelligence and understanding of matters which come before the House. So, he is in a very fortunate position. It has also been pointed out, and I agree with that opinion, that he is a gentleman par excellence. With all these qualifications I am sure he will add lustre to the position which he would occupy and he will help you, Sir, to maintain the dignity of the House.

I am sure I need not stress the point that anyone who knows Shri Swell knows that he is a man who will hold the balance between every party, no matter whether he is in favour of that view or opposed to that view. So far as justice is concerned, it would be very safe in his hands. Therefore, he would be an effective and able assistant to you, Sir, in keeping the impartiality and dignity of the chair which you are occupying and which he is going to occupy.

I wish him every success. I wish the House also every success under him. It is a matter of great satisfaction to me that a member belonging to the minority community has been elected to this post. Once more I wish him every success and I offer him every felicitation and congratulation.

SHRI TENNETI VISWANATHAM (Visakhapatnam): I add my congratulations to Professor Swell. All that has got to be said has been said. I want to add only this. Several members said that he will certainly act with independence; I endorse it. Many members said that he will act in fairness; I endorse it. They also said that he will act with impartiality. I endorse it. But I add: when no doubt he will stretch a point in favour of the opposition.

Although he is young, as has been said by many members, he has a wise head on young shoulders. More than that, he has got before him your able guidance and, I have no doubt, that with you as his guide he will conduct the deliberations of the House to the satisfaction of everybody. I wish him again success in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon Members, I am extremely happy and very much privileged in associating myself with the tributes paid to Shri Swell by Madam Prime Minister and leaders of parties and groups on the very happy occasion of his election as Deputy-Speaker of this House. I can only say that for the coming new year and for the times to come I have received the most precious gift from this House, in the form of Professor Swell as my Deputy Speaker.

Professor Swell is known to me for quite some time. He is a perfect gentleman, very able, sober and mature. He is also a very balanced gentleman, which is a quality very necessary for the occupation of this chair.

While we rejoice at his election, I may say that when he comes to occupy this chair he will find that it is not so easy as it appears to be from outside. It is quite tiring and taxing and now-a-days it keeps you on the nerves all the time. Members keep themselves on the nerves and keep the Chair on the nerves. It is a big trial. I am very confident, with his qualities he will come up to it. He has enough guts, courage and balance to stand to that.

We are passing through very difficult times. The country is going through great social, political and economic transition and, naturally, our young men and representatives who come to Parliament are very keen...

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: You are young; he is younger.

MR. SPEAKER: ...to express themselves in the House, vying with each other. In their own way they are perfectly justified. It is a task for the Chair to find time and opportunity for them so that they may justify their election and seat in this House to the people outside. I am very confident, with the experience and the temperament that Professor Swell has got, he will not be lacking in providing those opportunities to Members.

Many things are common between him and myself; one or two things are uncommon also. We belong to the minority community, both of us. I do not know if his minority community is as aggressive as mine, but we do belong to it. We come from the teaching profession. I had been teaching law; he had been teaching literature. Then, may I say, we both are gentlemen?

MR. S. M. BANERJEE: In a House of gentlemen.

MR. SPEAKER: But there is some contrast also. He comes from one end of the country and I come from the other end of the country, both extreme ends. I hope that we are sitting at very strategic points and there will be no risk to democracy from any end.

I sincerely, affectionately and very warmly congratulate Professor Swell. I wish him a great career as a presiding officer. He has been segregated for the first time. I had been doing this job for quite a few years. But the past does not have anything to do with what you have to do in this Parliament. I completely found my experience and my career as a presiding officer outside this House absolutely useless in this House. I have to draw upon various other faculties also to deal with people here, which I never do. But still I am very hopeful.

The absence of a few Members in this House has nothing personal against him; I do hope, it is not there. Now that he is elected Deputy-Speaker of this House, he belongs to the whole House, whether Members are absent or not. He belongs to the whole House and they should take it like that, that he belongs to them also. I am very confident, as one of the speakers said, that it should

be in that spirit. I do hope, it will come about that way.

I again thank him and the House very much for giving such a good gift to me. I would request him that after he finishes his speech, if he wants to reply, he should occupy this Chair. This has been a very turbulent Chair for me. Please occupy the first Chair on my left and embellish it with your accomplishments.

13 00 hrs.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Swell.

Shri Swell was then conducted to the Deputy-Speaker's seat on the front bench by Shri Frank Anthony and Shri N.C Chatterjee

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : What about Mr. Sheo Narain now ?

SHRI SWELL (Autonomous Districts) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not know really what to say and how to say in gratitude over this flood of affection, trust and confidence that has come from you, Sir, from the Prime Minister, from the leaders of all parties and groups and, I am sure, from the hearts of my colleagues here inside and also from the hearts of those, for reasons of their own, who find it inconvenient to be present in the House.

Sir, this affection has come to me unsolicited and, therefore, it is all the more precious and cherished by me. My own prayer and hope at this moment is that I may not falter or fumble and that I may live up to the expectations of my colleagues.

Many a time I have watched you and other colleagues of mine who have had an opportunity to sit in that Chair is your absence, Sir, and I have had always said to myself that if there was one man who deserved to be sympathised and pitied more than the others it was the man sitting in that Chair. Little did I realise that the same fate awaited me. I am confident, with the affection that I have received and the hope that I shall continue to receive the same affection and even indulgence from my colleagues, I shall be able to discharge my duties impartially, and maybe, as the Prime Minister said, sometimes firmly but to the satisfaction of the House.

To the older Members of this House, I would say, "Please continue to give me your affection, your consideration and sometimes your indulgence." But to the younger Members of this House to which group I am proud to belong, I would say, "This is the challenge to youth. Please give me your cooperation. Let not the hopes of youth perish in that Chair."

Sir, I have always held the view that this Parliament is the most potent instrument for a peaceful, orderly, social, economic and political change and that as long as the people of this great country of ours whom we represent continue to have their faith, trust and confidence in this Parliament, the parliamentary democracy is safe in this country. It is, therefore, the bounden duty of each one of us not to do anything, even when we are seized by, what I would say, righteous indignation, to denigrate the House or to bring it into contempt. Sir, in all your efforts to maintain and promote the sovereignty, the dignity and the effectiveness of this House, I shall assist you and give you of my best.

I will end on a slight personal note, the note which has been struck by the Prime Minister and many of my elderly and very valued colleagues. It is true that I come from a group in this great country of ours, a small group and also from Assam, a few lakhs strong as against nearly 6,000 lakhs of population in this country and that group is tucked in a small though exquisite corner in the north-east of our country. Yet, it has not been a handicap to me. The offer of this office to me by my colleagues in this House should serve as a testimony to the wide world that the heart of India is great and good despite the trials, tribulations and sometimes aberrations and that every one of her children, however, small numerically, however remote geographically, has a place of honour in this country and is loved and cherished as such. It should also serve as a testimony that under the new dispensation the gate is wide open for the youth to come to its own and precious years should not be cast away in anger.

Sir, I approach my new task in this spirit. If my approach is right, I cannot fail.

Thank you, Sir.