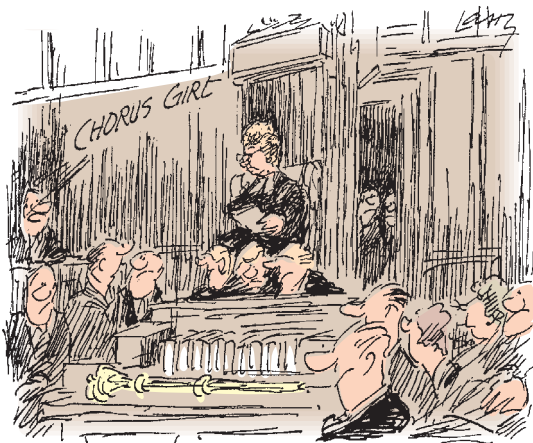


# The Speaker of the House



**Members of Parliament elect the official, called the *Speaker*, who enforces the rules of debate in the House of Commons and decides what they can and cannot say about each other**

Over the years, all these insults have been ruled out of order: *Blackguard, git, swine, poltroon, cowardly, bigoted and malevolent young puppy*. But it was deemed all right to describe an opponent as *indulging in a famous imitation of a semi-house-trained polecat*. Despite the wish to inflict such indignities, MPs must always refer to each other as 'The Honourable Member' and never by name