

*The Address—Mr. Breton*

(Text):

Since last session events have taken place to which I feel I must refer. Among others I wish to recall the appointment of the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Pearson) to the cease-fire committee of the United Nations. His attitude in the Korean struggle, as it appears from his broadcast delivered at Lake Success on December 5, and from his other statements, conforms in the best possible manner to the general wishes of this country. May I offer my congratulations to the Secretary of State for External Affairs upon the good work he is doing at Lake Success.

May I also extend my best wishes to the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys (Mr. Prudham) on the occasion of his recent appointment. I am sure that every hon. member will rejoice at the news that the province of Alberta is now represented in the cabinet.

I also offer my congratulations to the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Benidickson) who has been appointed parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Transport; to the hon. member for Regina City (Mr. McCusker) who has been appointed parliamentary assistant to the Minister of National Health and Welfare; to the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. Maybank) who has been appointed parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Resources and Development, and also to the hon. member for Vancouver Centre (Mr. Campney) who has been appointed parliamentary assistant to the Minister of National Defence.

(Translation):

I also congratulate the hon. member for Montmagny-L'Islet (Mr. Lesage) who has been appointed parliamentary assistant to the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Pearson). My congratulations are also extended to the hon. member for Gaspé (Mr. Langlois) who has been appointed parliamentary assistant to the Postmaster General (Mr. Rinfret).

(Text):

I also take this opportunity to express my sympathy to the family of Mr. J. L. Douglas, the ex-member for Queens, and to the family of Mr. J. E. Matthews, the ex-member for Brandon, whose recent deaths have deeply grieved this house.

(Translation):

I cannot let the appointment of my predecessor in this house, Mr. Georges-Emile Lapalme, as leader of the Liberal party in the province of Quebec, pass unnoticed. I am happy at this time to pay tribute to Mr.

[Mr. Breton.]

Lapalme and to wish him all the success he deserves in the discharge of his new duties. The new provincial leader's campaigns in the constituency of Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm, his deep knowledge of politics, his liking for work, his cultural attainments, his intellectual and moral integrity, his energy and his talents marked him out for a leading role in the administration of public affairs in the province of Quebec.

Mr. Lapalme acquired an excellent working knowledge of public affairs during his term of office in Ottawa and his experience as a member of parliament made him conscious of the urgency of social reforms necessary in the province of Quebec. I am confident that his policy of social justice, patterned upon the Liberal doctrine, will have a favourable effect on the trend in the province of Quebec.

Since the adjournment of the house, two dominion-provincial conferences were held, the first in Quebec on September 25 and the second in Ottawa on December 4 last. Their purpose was to discuss means of amending the Canadian constitution and to consider the renewal of tax agreements between governments, as well as problems of social security.

Every member of this house has, I am sure, noted with satisfaction that there is an ever increasing spirit of co-operation between the representatives of the various provinces and of the dominion government.

The mistrust which may have been present at first has given place to a growing desire to co-operate, and to the unanimous will to settle in a friendly manner some of the serious problems in the field of constitutional rights. Even though, so far, discussions dealt mainly with matters of procedure, it is to be hoped that once this important point has been clearly defined, settlement of the others will follow.

The government deserves, of course, to be commended by this house for the manner in which it has dealt with the constitutional problem, both as to form—amendment methods or procedure—and to substance, by placing particular emphasis on the necessity of broadening the scope of social security in this country, while at the same time respecting the autonomy of the provinces.

By thus classifying the constitutional problems, the government has led the way and, in every instance, has helped clear up what misunderstandings may have existed at the time.

Indeed it will be remembered that, in the fall of 1949, at the first session of this parliament, the government introduced its three-point program for constitutional reform:

1. Abolition of appeals to the privy council.