

The Address—Mr. MacKay

He also said that the closing down of the Noranda refinery in the near future was due to the fact that Texasgulf was building its own refinery in Timmins and that the company would begin refining its own products itself in a year or two. Mr. Speaker, the materials coming from the Timmins plant of Texasgulf represented only 15 per cent of the refining work of Noranda. How can you justify the closing down of a plant such as the refinery of Noranda when only 15 per cent of the materials to be refined have been removed? A little later, I read in the newspapers that Mr. Bérubé stated that it has always been difficult to find a job in the private sector in Canada, especially in businesses where transactions were made in English.

But I can see now or I could see then, Mr. Speaker, that it was not because the company was English, but that the man was very dishonest. I do not think Canadian companies are in search of dishonest people just for the sake of it. So I reiterate my invitation to our Quebec friends. I would like them to come to our part of the country to see for themselves that we Franco-Ontarians, from Ottawa, Timmins, all over—and I shall restrict my comments to our province because I did not visit with all French-Canadian communities across Canada—I invite them to see for themselves that we are not being denied our rights, that we live the life that we choose, that we shall continue to do so and that we will always be happy to do so.

In concluding, Mr. Speaker, I fully trust the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) to solve that problem and I urge my constituents as well as all other Canadians to follow his lead. If we follow his example, a fair solution for all Canadians shall be found.

● (1712)

[English]

Mr. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to take part in the debate on the address in reply. I should like to say, first of all, that we on this side are very glad to see our colleague, the hon. member for Timmins (Mr. Roy), back in his place and looking so well.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacKay: We hope he will have a good session and that the illness which kept him from us will not recur.

I should like to pay tribute to the mover and to the seconder of the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. Both these hon. members acquitted themselves very well and I wish to add my respect to the remarks made by the hon. member for Louis-Hébert (Mr. Dawson), about the gracious and talented lady, Madam Morin, who served in the House of Commons before he did. She will be long remembered and greatly missed and, as the mover said so frankly, he has a great example when following in her footsteps.

The hon. member for Malpeque (Mr. Wood), also made an excellent speech. I thought perhaps it would have been appropriate for him to have mentioned his predecessor, the Hon. J. A. MacLean, a man who nobly served in this place with great distinction, a man who served his country in time of war and in

[Mr. Roy (Timmins).]

time of peace. I think he, too, realizes he has a very big pair of shoes to fill as he sits in the House of Commons to discharge his responsibilities.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacKay: I personally would like to say that we appreciate the way in which Your Honour guided our deliberations here in the House of Commons in the pre-television era. We assure you that your television image is just as good as your parliamentary image and we look forward to your distinguished guidance in a new era in the House of Commons.

Sir, I have to say in all honesty that I found the Speech from the Throne a disappointing document. It really does little to reassure Canadians that the government has any new initiatives with which to guide the country through what is bound to be a very difficult period. I am going to read an excerpt from the Speech from the Throne which I found rather surprising:

The government dedicates itself profoundly to the rediscovery of the spirit of unity. It wishes to learn from all who are interested in Canada and who have thoughts on how it can be made a better place in which to live. It is prepared, particularly, to work with the governments of the provinces, all of whom have a vital interest in a better Canada.

Mr. Speaker, under whose auspices was this spirit of unity, which the government now seeks to rediscover, lost? That is what strikes me so forcefully. What has happened during the past ten wasted years—wasted in the sense of helping this country proceed to its destiny? Is it logical that a government which claims it has national unity as its greatest objective should say that it is dedicating itself profoundly to its rediscovery? There is something very much at fault in a statement like that.

It seems to me, looking back with the benefit of hindsight, that having a prime minister, in this particular case from Quebec, who would naturally be assumed to have a special understanding of Quebec problems, was not as advantageous to the country as one might have logically expected. It is ironic but true that sometimes people who come from a particular region are not necessarily qualified to speak for it. It is interesting to note, for example, that the most profound work on American democracy was not written by an American; the man who exhibited the best understanding of the situation in America as far as democracy was concerned, and whose work is still a classic, was Alex de Toqueville. The man who wrote the best work on racial problems in the United States was a Swede, Gunnar Myrdall. His book was "The American Dilemma".

It seems to me there is a case to be made in saying that our Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), who is undeniably a bright man, spent a great deal of his time attending the London School of Economics and Harvard and going off on esoteric pursuits, which was his undoubted right to do, while his contemporaries stayed back in la belle province and coped with life and perhaps have gained a far greater and more profound understanding of the basic issues in Quebec than the Prime Minister has demonstrated. At least this is judging by the results, which have seen a separatist government elected in la