

The Address—Mr. Goyer

● (3:50 p.m.)

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

ADDRESS IN REPLY MOVED BY MR.
J. P. GOYER AND SECONDED BY
MR. ROBERT STANBURY

The house proceeded to the consideration of the speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor General at the opening of the session.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Pierre Goyer (Dollard): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to congratulate you on your election and to express the hope that the qualities you have shown in the past will remain with you in the discharge of your new duties. I have not had the chance to get to know you very well yet, but you certainly have every reason to be proud of the reputation you have made for yourself among the members of this house. To prove it, I have only to recall the support you received yesterday.

I had been told that discussions in this house often were long and hard. Perhaps I may be allowed to question such an assertion, in view of the fact that, since yesterday, all motions have been accepted with an amazing degree of unanimity and dispatch. But now I feel a bit reassured, if I may put it that way. The question period indicated that, from now on, that unanimity might not be quite so strong.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker, I should like to thank the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) for the honour he has extended to the constituents of Dollard in asking me to move the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. I should also like to join with my electors in congratulating the Prime Minister for having once again led the Liberal party to victory.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Goyer: Mr. Speaker, in the last few years, federal-provincial relations, and more particularly, the relations with the province of Quebec have given rise to many problems. Those problems have revived the question of the relations that should exist between French speaking and English speaking Canadians within confederation.

Some people are anchored in extreme positions which greatly threaten to aggravate the situation beyond hope. I loathe those extremists, whether they be French speaking or

[Mr. Speaker.]

English speaking Canadians, whether they act openly or prefer to resort to passive resistance, which is just as blameworthy. But that is not enough.

There is in our country a majority of citizens who sincerely hope for the advent of a general consensus and such a majority should normally be represented within the Canadian parliament.

With this majority in mind, the government should without delay take positive action to implement what to this day seemed only desirable. This positive action need not wait for the report of the Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, nor for the passing of a generation to become operative. Even if new findings require adjustments, the federal government should stay ahead of public opinion and this implies concrete measures.

Already the government has reset in motion—and this time full ahead—the mechanics of federal-provincial conferences. It was high time the federal government realized that the requirements of the war effort could no longer be justified after 20 years.

Hence, the necessity of developing areas of jurisdiction against an obsolete status quo. This proves the necessity of studying together the problems arising from joint jurisdictions. Dialogue has now started; it may be painful but it is sustained. What better proof that negotiation is not abdication, in spite of what some people maintain.

While on that point, Mr. Speaker, let us not any longer believe or encourage the belief that Quebec's claims are always inspired by tenets of isolationism and realize, for a change, that other provinces too are asserting their rights.

● (4:00 p.m.)

It is becoming increasingly obvious that the provinces are endeavouring to take over management of those fields of jurisdiction which are rightfully theirs and which, the federal government has taken over by setting out its own policies, for lack of appropriate provincial policies and due to the war effort which had drained revenues into the federal coffers.

It is true that the provinces are often better equipped to meet some of the needs of the people. Why then should there be vain struggles, when, in the final analysis, the citizens are the only ones to suffer from the ensuing delays.

For the common good, it is preferable to hand over to the provinces those spheres of