

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Senate of Canada, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Excellency for the gracious speech which Your Excellency has addressed to both houses of Parliament.

He said:

(Translation):

Honourable senators, it gives me pleasure to express myself in French in order to move the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. This is the first time that I have had that honour in Parliament.

The atmosphere here in the Senate is quite different from that which I have known in the House of Commons.

I wish to thank the Leader of the Government in the Senate for the honour he has bestowed upon me in asking me to propose the adoption of the Speech from the Throne.

The first time that I came to Ottawa, I was six years old. My father, who was then a member of Parliament, sent me up to the gallery. The only person, apart from my father, whom I recognized on the floor of the house, was none other than Sir Wilfrid Laurier. With the good nature for which he was well known, he came and shook hands with me.

I am happy to recognize in this chamber some old friends of mine for whom I have always had a very high regard.

Honourable senators, I would like to raise a point in which I am keenly interested. Why should we use the term "the other place", when speaking of either chamber of Parliament? The custom originated several centuries ago, when there was a marked difference between the poor classes and the rich ones, but we are now in the twentieth century. I hope I shall not be called to order by the Speaker of the Senate if I call the other chamber the House of Commons because it seems to me that, according to the British North America Act, the two chambers of Parliament should be given their true names.

I recognize Senator Power, who was dean of the House of Commons when I was its vice-dean, if I may be allowed to use the expression. We were then the two senior members of the House of Commons and today we are two junior members of the Senate, since we were the last to be sworn in. My greetings also to the Honourable Senator Croll, whose invaluable services at the time of the inquiry held in Windsor in 1930 regarding minimum salaries for men and women I have not forgotten.

(Text):

It is most difficult for me, but I intend to make, for the first time in my life, a non-political speech in Parliament.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Pouliot: The only thing that I will quote as a matter of politics is the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons to the motion for the Address. Pardon me, I have the amendment in French:

(Translation):

We respectfully represent that Your Excellency's advisers, by reason of their indifference, inertia and lack of leadership in the face of serious national problems and their disregard of the rights of Parliament, are not entitled to the confidence of this house.

(Text):

I do not find that fair in its terms. That is all I have to say about politics, but I will mention some of the activities of the various departments of the Government of Canada.

(Translation):

Relations between the federal and provincial governments—The Speech from the Throne refers to the federal-provincial conference of last October and then adds that following "this useful discussion" the federal Government placed before all provincial governments "a specific proposal for federal-provincial fiscal arrangements to commence next year".

It is evident that "useful discussion" is a discussion which produces good results, but to obtain such results patience and a spirit of co-operation and good will are required.

As the Prime Minister of Canada so aptly said in the speech he made last Thursday on the address:

The past year was an active one in the development of our relations with the provincial governments. We had several major conferences with the leaders of the provincial governments, and have made considerable progress in developing new patterns of co-operation.

Last year four conferences were held between Ottawa and the provinces: a preliminary one in April; a special conference in June to help the unemployed; and in October, a full conference at which

(1) a committee of ministers was established "to consider in more detail the subject of health insurance";

(2) a continuing committee of federal and provincial officials was also established "to meet from time to time to exchange information and examine technical problems in the field of federal-provincial fiscal and economic relations";

(3) It was also agreed "that a meeting of the ministers concerned with highway matters would be held to consider the steps which should be taken to continue the work on the Trans-Canada highway. The Minister of Public Works, the Honourable Mr. Winters, convened this meeting in November, and the Government will be introducing legislation to accelerate the completion of essential links in this highway and to continue general work on it elsewhere up to the agreed standards".