

*The Address—Mr. Chevrier*

men and women in the press gallery to supplement their present wire services. There is no room for such expansion now.

The other suggestion I should like to make is that the government consider the appointment of a new type of officer in the major departments. He would be a spokesman for the minister on policy at such times as the minister is not available. The ministers are busy. At least one British department, the foreign office, has such a spokesman now. I need hardly refer to the examples in the United States. A person to fill this position could be drawn from the ranks of present information officers in the departments, given a voice at policy meetings of the departments and enabled to work out some arrangement with the minister so that ministerial control would be ever present. The dividing line between public relations and press information officer may seem a thin one, but I am sure that a public relations officer would be an asset to many a busy minister.

The big news in the Halifax riding will be the housing redevelopment, plans for which are proceeding at best speed. I may mention also the new international airport, the fine harbour, excellent vacation land in parts of the county, a new machine for drying pulp at Sheet Harbour which is attracting people from all over the world. Our story is one of growth in this finest of countries, and I hope I have communicated to the house some of my enthusiasm for the riding.

*(Translation):*

**Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Laurier):** Mr. Speaker, I thank you for recognizing me at last.

I am happy to take part in the debate this evening. It is the traditional debate which follows upon the reading of the speech from the throne in the house and which allows the members to voice their opinion on the measures which the government intends to bring forward during the session. The circumstances surrounding the onset of this discussion, this time, are extraordinary. Not only is this a new parliament where the government enjoys a majority unprecedented in the political history of this country, but a parliament in which the opposition has been decimated by the popular vote.

I am glad to be back in the house where I am pleased to see again many familiar and friendly faces, with whom I have had the pleasure to sit for over twenty years of public life. On the other hand I regret that many others I have known have now disappeared, swept away, as it were, by the fortunes of politics.

Let me at once congratulate the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Diefenbaker) on his brilliant and unprecedented victory. For us

[Mr. McCleave.]

in the opposition there is only one thing to do; it is to face the facts, and bow before the will of the people which has been expressed in such unequivocal fashion.

In circumstances such as these, the government has a great many responsibilities to discharge, first of all to its own friends—of which I have nothing to say—and also to the opposition.

We who sit on this side of the house took power in similar circumstances in 1935 and 1949.

I still hear, Mr. Speaker, the groans of those then sitting in the opposition, who complained of the way in which the government treated them and, in due course, expressed their discontent.

Today, Mr. Speaker, the situation is reversed and since the government supporters have experienced this situation for many years, I am sure that, recalling what the conditions were then, they will want to put in practice the recommendations they made at the time.

I congratulate you, sir, on the great honour conferred upon you. For the second time in less than a year you have been chosen to preside over the proceedings of this house. For the second time also you will, I have no doubt, exercise your heavy responsibility with justice and fairness, just as you did in the last parliament. I hope—indeed, I am convinced—that you will continue to play your part with dignity and efficiency.

At the risk of offending your modesty, let me recall a fact which for members from the province of Quebec is of special significance. In your city of Toronto where more than 40,000 French-speaking Canadians are living at the present time, a great campaign has just started in favour of the opening of a bilingual secondary school and you, Mr. Speaker, have agreed to act as honorary president of this fund-raising campaign. I congratulate you for doing so and at the same time I wish you complete success in this campaign.

I congratulate the new ministers from the province of Quebec and, incidentally, I point out to the Prime Minister that we have waited fairly long for the appointment of those ministers. I also congratulate the government on having made a choice and, even if they were sworn in only on the eve of a new session, without being given too much time to prepare the estimates of their departments, I am convinced that the wise and learned advisers in their departments will see to it