

*The Address—Mr. Cyr*

real, Toronto, Vancouver, Ottawa-Hull, Edmonton, Hamilton, Quebec City, Calgary and Winnipeg. In order to check urban growth in these areas and in others just as big that are developing, governments should promote the creation of new cities where man's health will not be constantly endangered.

As concerns the building of homes for older citizens, I should like to bring to your attention a few considerations.

In fact, it can be seen that the provincial governments affect much larger credits to the construction of such homes in urban centres than in rural communities. From such a situation, it is clear that the older people called upon to live in these homes will end their lives in centres where pollution reigns supreme, not to mention all the other problems of urban life which they will have to face. No doubt there would be some advantage in building those homes in the countryside, near lakes, beaches, rivers or mountains.

If the governments responsible for the construction of centres for older people provided a more generous contribution, it would no doubt be possible, without getting too far from the hospital services older people require, to build those homes in tourist resorts; in so doing, we would ensure to the people concerned a more favourable environment, while offering them healthier recreation activities. In such places, the retired people could practice light sports, according to their physical condition, even do some gardening, things they could not do in larger centres.

At the present time, the government has to rely on programs such as New Horizons to keep busy the older people living in urban centres, whereas if they were properly settled in places far from the cities, they could work, find recreation and stroll in peaceful and beautiful surroundings, all things essential to the relaxation of the mind.

Mr. Speaker, I should now like to address myself to another subject. On December 27, Canada suffered the loss of a great Canadian. We were all saddened by the death of the Right Hon. Lester B. Pearson.

At the opening of the twenty-ninth parliament, both Houses rightfully paid tribute to this former prime minister.

In the House of Commons, the right hon. Prime Minister stated the following:

In this place he was the initiator and guide of many measures that have contributed to the strength and purpose of Canada—our flag, some of our most outstanding social legislation, the recognition in various ways of the diversity of Canada and of the historic rights of its peoples.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) spoke in these terms:

To him, Canada was a country to love and to build. He worked sincerely and at great length for the cause of unity in this country.

And the leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Lewis) stated this:

Also, as the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) indicated, it was during his regime that we witnessed the debate on—and it was not always a happy debate—the acceptance of a distinctive Canadian flag.

[Mr. Cyr.]

I shall now quote the leader of the Social Credit party of Canada (Mr. Caouette) who said:

Mr. Pearson worked for national unity in Canada. He never said anything in the west against the east or in the east against the west. He always tried to convince the Canadian people, whether they spoke French, Ukrainian, Italian, English or any other language, that their first duty was to be genuine Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, I knew Mr. Pearson personally, and everyone will agree that he knew how to listen to individual members and give them suitable advice. I remember that in November 1965, when I was defeated in the general election in Gaspé, the Prime Minister called me in his office and talked with me for almost 30 minutes. Needless to say that because of his warmth and his desire to help his colleagues, I have always considered him thereafter as a real father. If I remained in politics, it is as a result of his sound advice.

The Prime Minister who gave to the Canadian people a distinctive flag is no longer with us. All political parties paid a tribute to him, and rightly so for having given a flag to our country.

On February 15, 1965, by royal proclamation, the flag bearing a maple leaf was declared the national flag of Canada. That was eight years ago, and throughout Canada as in friendly countries, this flag is respected. As a matter of fact in 1965, six months after its proclamation, I was a member of the first Canadian parliamentary delegation to enter the Soviet Union. I can assure the house that when we got off the plane at Moscow airport and saw the Canadian flag waving above the air terminal, our hearts burst with excitement. Wherever we went, the Canadian flag was hoisted and we were proud of that gesture on the part of the Soviet authorities. The same thing happened when we visited the other countries of Eastern Europe.

The Department of Public Works spent thousands of dollars for setting up spotlights on Parliament Hill buildings so that Canadians as well as foreigners may see the Canadian flag by night as well as by day.

Mr. Speaker, it is highly regrettable to see that after eight years, Canada's national flag is still without a place of honour in the Senate and the House of Commons.

During the last parliament, the hon. member for Cochrane (Mr. Stewart) introduced, on three occasions, a bill calling for the display of the Canadian flag in both Houses of Parliament, but this bill was never passed. Moreover, several hon. members spoke about it, but the House never took any decision in this regard. I myself spoke to the House leader and to several ministers, but this matter has always been outstanding.

On February 2, 1972, I wrote a letter to the Speaker of the House, expressing our desire to see our flag displayed in the House of Commons and in all committee rooms. The Chairman answered as follows:

Dear colleague,

I received your letter of February 2 and I read it with much interest.

As you point out, many of our colleagues suggested that the Canadian flag be displayed not only in the House of Commons but in our committee rooms. This is an excellent suggestion; personally, I am prepared to accept it without reservations. However, such a decision should be taken by the House itself, . . .