

*The Address—Mr. Michener*

municipal grants in lieu of taxation, for the disabled and for veterans' legislation will be of special interest and concern to the people in this area.

The riding of St. Paul's is not an old one as it had its beginnings only in 1935. During the first three parliaments after that time it was represented in this house by Mr. Douglas Ross. In the last parliament it was represented by Mr. James H. Rooney. Both of these gentlemen will be cordially remembered by many hon. members. The latter gentleman was a Liberal and so I have characterized my recent activities, not so much as a campaign but as a mission for the second conversion of St. Paul's.

**Mr. Knowles:** Salvation is to come later.

**Mr. Michener:** This riding takes its name from St. Paul. As I have made reference to that, perhaps I should go further and refer to one of the admonitions of St. Paul. If I remember correctly, he said that there is a time to speak and a time not to speak. After listening through ten or eleven sittings of the house when we have heard what I estimate to be in excess of 350,000 words uttered by some 68 hon. members it seems to me that we are approaching the time that St. Paul had in mind. In any event I am sure that the law of diminishing returns is beginning to work. Although we have had in this debate many fine speeches which, I am sure, have been greatly appreciated and which will be of great value, nevertheless to my mind they are not related to any particular business of this house. Therefore they do not lead to any concrete conclusion. In those circumstances, Mr. Speaker, with so much important business of the house ahead of us, such as revision of the Bank Act and of the Criminal Code, apart from other important matters, it seems to me that if the identification speeches which remain to be made by the new members—and which I have suggested might be of five to ten minutes duration—were the order of the day, they could all be cleared off in not more than one day more of debate. Then we could proceed with the business of the house.

*(Translation):*

I shall conclude my remarks, sir, in the mother tongue of your colleague, the Speaker of the house, and congratulate you both on your nomination to the posts you fill. In the riding of St. Paul's we have not many occasions to use the French language but we respect it and wish to know it better.

**Mr. Maurice Breton (Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm):** I am happy to join with the other members of the house in congratulating the Speaker for this parliament (Mr. Beaudoin),

[Mr. Michener.]

and in paying tribute to the courtesy and competence with which he performs his new functions.

*(Text):*

Also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, may I extend to you my congratulations on the courteous and competent way in which you perform your duties.

*(Translation):*

I also take pleasure in congratulating the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) on the manner in which he conducted the last campaign, because he did not give in to electoral pressure which is always brought to bear upon those who go before the people; his campaign was always a clean one and he avoided making promises.

I also wish to pay my compliments to the new parliamentary assistants as well as to the mover (Mr. Hollingworth) and the second (Mr. Villeneuve) of the address in reply to the speech from the throne. They fulfilled their task brilliantly.

I am also happy to see before me my hon. colleague from Three Rivers (Mr. Balcer) who, for the past few sessions, has faithfully echoed the campaign for autonomy in the province of Quebec and has repeated in this house statements we have so often read in certain autonomist newspapers and heard more particularly on parliament hill in Quebec. Unfortunately, I believe, he has not studied them closely before submitting them to the house, because they are filled with inaccuracies. That is why I propose tonight to analyse them one by one to show the house how futile they are.

Our colleague states that the federal government is taking over: first, all taxation sources in the country; secondly, that it is draining all taxation sources thereby depriving the provinces of their revenues; thirdly, that the policy of federal subsidies to the provinces tends to destroy the spirit of confederation and is against the spirit of the confederation act itself; finally, that the federal government invades spheres which do not come within its jurisdiction. He then calls for a federal-provincial conference to settle all those problems.

Let me say, first, Mr. Speaker, that I am convinced that the great majority of members of this house are in favour of the autonomy of the provinces and of all public bodies of our country, for the same reasons that all those who live in democratic countries like ours defend individual freedom and the right that each and every one has to human dignity.

But, if it is our right and duty to defend the autonomy of public bodies, private associations or individuals, I believe, Mr. Speaker, that it is also our duty to discuss these prob-