

*The Address—Mr. Chretien*

charge with dignity and impartiality the heavy responsibilities that have been entrusted to you by both sides of the house.

I might be permitted also, Mr. Speaker, to congratulate the movers of the address in reply, the hon. members for Northumberland (Miss Jewett) and Lotbiniere (Mr. Choquette), for having so splendidly performed their duty in the house.

(Text):

I am very glad to be a member of a party which has a leader of the calibre of the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson). Never has an English speaking Prime Minister had such a comprehension of biculturalism and the fact that Canada is a different nation from the United States. This is because one third of the population is French speaking and will always be so in the centuries to come.

(Translation):

Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to represent the riding of St. Maurice-Lafleche, which was set up in 1935, and which, even at that time, through the foresight of its electors, enabled a Liberal government to take over from a Conservative administration. In 1963, the electors of my riding of St. Maurice-Lafleche decided once again to help the Liberal party stop the spread of Social Credit and sound the beginning of the end for that party in the province of Quebec, and also to put in power a Liberal government to replace, once more, a Conservative administration.

Mr. Speaker, I succeed a Liberal member, Mr. J. A. Richard, who sat here for many years and served his riding and the house well. Therefore, on behalf of the electors of the riding of St. Maurice-Lafleche, I wish to pay tribute to that man who, although well in years, represented with dignity for many years the riding that did me the honour to elect me.

Mr. Speaker, since I have been elected, many of my English speaking colleagues have asked me questions on a problem of the day and wanted to know what I thought of the separatist movement in the province of Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we should not give too much importance to that situation. However, I would like, in a few words, to try and clarify the matter for the information of my English speaking friends who represent ridings in other provinces.

In the last century the province of Quebec had a population of farmers and craftsmen. It was only in the last generation that Quebec started to become an industrial province. Such a deep transformation creates a number of problems. At the present time, with the changes the Premier of Quebec, Hon. Jean

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Lesage, is bringing about, especially in the field of education, thousands of young French Canadians will soon make their entry on the labour market while thousands of university graduates will start their active life, and they will all ask for adequate employment.

Now, Mr. Speaker, those qualified young men want to have their due place in a French Canadian community and in the community of the province of Quebec as a whole.

As a French Canadian, I must admit that we all have a place in this house. We may speak French or English here and we enjoy complete freedom. But, unfortunately, I find that in the past French Canadians in the province of Quebec were too often left in the background, more particularly in the industrial and commercial field.

Today, we are able to carry out some functions competently. But unfortunately some industrialists and businessmen in Quebec have but too often failed to be frank and honest enough or were prejudiced against their French speaking fellow citizens, to the point of limiting their progress to a certain level. However, at this time, I have to render due tribute to various financial, commercial and industrial institutions in the province of Quebec, which offer to Canadians of French origin more and more possibilities for an advancement, to which they, indeed, have a right.

As a matter of fact, *La Presse* of Saturday, May 11, 1963, reproduced an item published in the *Financial Post* and stating that French had become the fashion in Montreal and that, if industrialists in the province of Quebec began to offer possibilities of advancement to French Canadians, it was due to a recognition of the latter's increased competence and present economic strength, which had to be reckoned with, as well as of the need to negotiate with those people. That is why many corporations in the province of Quebec now offer some possibilities of advancement to French speaking Canadians. I hope this trend will develop more and more in the years to come, so that we may live in peace within the Canadian confederation, as we trust we shall.

Mr. Speaker, we may, of course, pass some legislation in this house. However, the Canadian people in general, and more particularly the English speaking Canadians, should, in the province of Quebec as in the other provinces, give French Canadians the same possibilities of progress so that there would be no such discrimination as has been noted in the past.