

Grouped within the social unit which forms the backbone of our community, the parish, our large families have lived up to ancestral traditions in the matter of hard work and large families.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. DION: If I am correctly informed, the mother parish of my district, Notre Dame d'Hebertville, has a record birthrate, with an average of ten children per family.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. DION: Louis Hemon, the immortal author of *Maria Chapdelaine*, wrote about the population of Lake St. John: "They belong to a race that knows not death". He might have added that they belong to a race that is fully determined to survive.

During the last session, the Canadian parliament has seen fit to give official recognition to the extraordinary development of that part of our country which comprises the Saguenay River and Lake St. John. According to the new distribution, the three constituencies of Charlevoix-Saguenay, Chicoutimi and Lake St. John-Roberval have been subdivided into six counties, namely, Saguenay, Charlevoix, Chicoutimi, Lapointe, Lake St. John and Roberval.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. DION: I take pleasure in thanking parliament for that act of justice. I am confident that the population which benefits through that move will prove itself worthy of it by continuing to develop and enrich that bit of Canadian soil. However, I do not wish to leave the impression that all is well in the fine district of Lake St. John. For instance, I could not truthfully claim that the development of our means of communications has kept pace with our agricultural and industrial progress. The railroad was built over sixty years ago; it was good enough for a settlement, but it does not suit the purpose today and does not give good service to our agricultural and industrial organizations. There is room for much improvement in that connection. I shall not say more now, but I will probably have the opportunity of dealing with the matter some other time.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. DION: Those are a few of the things I had to say about the constituency of Lake St. John-Roberval which, needless to say, I am proud to represent in this house.

(Text):

Mr. Speaker, I wish to mention some events which took place, in our country and abroad, since the end of the last session of this parliament.

First of all, should I say how happy every Canadian was to celebrate the marriage of Her Royal Highness Princess Elizabeth to the Duke of Edinburgh. It was the conclusion of a fine romance. From every part of the commonwealth greetings were sent to the newly-married couple, and I am sure I express the sentiment of all members of this house in extending our best wishes to this young and charming couple. The expression of these sentiments, from all Canadians, had its best proponent in the person of our Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King). On that occasion he was conferred the Order of Merit, upon which we congratulate him sincerely. May I say also to the Prime Minister that we followed with great interest his visits in France, Belgium and Holland. On all occasions our Prime Minister expressed his pride in being a Canadian; and here in Canada, all Canadians were proud of him.

On the international scene may I mention the active part played by Canada in the united nations assembly? It was with just satisfaction that we noted the election of Canada as member of the security council. Our delegation, under the direction of the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. St. Laurent) and the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ilesley) accomplished good work despite difficulties and obstructions.

The Canadian policy stands for the continuation of the international relations inside the united nations organization, which remains for us the cornerstone of our international policy.

We hope that it will be possible, in the early future, to arrive at the conclusion of treaties of peace, which could enable the return of normal conditions in Europe. The Canadian government has indicated that it was pleased to see the initiative taken by the United States for an early conference toward the conclusion of a peace treaty with Japan.

Here in the house, I am happy to mention the appointment and election of the new Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Gregg). He is not a newcomer to the house, and we are sure he will fulfil his new duties with all success possible.

I would mention also the election of the new member for Halifax (Mr. Dickey), who will second the address. I congratulate him upon his success, and I am sure he will be equal to the reputation which preceded his election to the house.