

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, March 5, 1971

The House met at 11 a.m.

THE PRIME MINISTER

CONGRATULATIONS ON MARRIAGE

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I apologize to the House for not having given notice yesterday of the intention of our esteemed Prime Minister to get married.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Sharp: The trouble is he did not consult the members of his Cabinet on this essentially private affair, but I am sure all members of the House will join me in wishing great happiness and long life to the happy pair.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (11:10 a.m.)

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition I join with the Secretary of State for External Affairs in extending deep and warm congratulation and good wishes to the Prime Minister and his bride. I was surprised, however, that he made an admission that the cabinet was not consulted. That apparently is not an unusual course for the Prime Minister, but in this case more understandable than usual. My suggestions are not often accepted by the members of the government, and in particular the Prime Minister, but I think the House would want to know what I said on the occasion of my 30th year in the House of Commons, on March 25, 1970 when in response to the warmth that often fills this chamber I stated:

I do not want to mention personal matters, but on an occasion like this, filled with emotion, I do want to say that one's happiness is greatly increased by having a wife to support and to counsel one. I am not passing that on to the Prime Minister by way of a suggestion but I say to him that if he would follow my advice in that connection he would be amazed at the transition that would take place.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: I wish to the Prime Minister and his bride the happiness that has been that of my wife and myself. The bride is the daughter of one of the most distinguished members this House has seen in my time. He was elected for the first time in 1940 during his honeymoon. Some years thereafter I recall seeing the bride of yesterday in the gallery opposite you, Mr. Speaker. She then was about 4 or 5 years of age. It was one of those occasions when there was an interruption from the gallery, dissimilar however from that which

took place yesterday. In a voice which could be heard all over the chamber she said, "There's my daddy".

All hon. members will join in wishing the couple all that is good, with the happiness of today to be theirs always.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, the Acting Prime Minister need not have apologized for not having notified the House yesterday that the Prime Minister intended to embark on the sea of matrimony. We in the opposition parties are now accustomed to the Prime Minister doing things without giving us any advance notice. The fact that he did not inform the cabinet is understandable. They would probably have insisted on the matter being considered by a study session, followed by a task force, and brought to a conclusion by a white paper, after which nothing would have been done.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): I suggest that at the Prime Minister's age such delay is unthinkable.

It is a matter of great pleasure to those who come from British Columbia that the Prime Minister should have chosen a girl from British Columbia as his wife. This will help to cement relations between the two provinces of Quebec and British Columbia. I know that the people of B.C. will be very pleased at this event. I am sure that members of the NDP join all members in the House, and the people of Canada generally, in wishing both the Prime Minister and his wife every happiness in the years ahead.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, we were both surprised and pleased to learn that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) had changed his civil status. On this important occasion, we wish to offer him and his bride our most sincere wishes for happiness and success in their new life.

Mr. Speaker, according to the Bible, it is not good for man to live alone. The Prime Minister has understood this and he has chosen as his bride a Canadian girl from a worthy and eminent family, and we are happy about this.

I would also like to recall that the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands and leader of the New