

*Felicitations to Prime Minister*

The Prime Minister has made a great contribution to the growing up, if I may put it that way, of this country; to the achievement of its maturity as a nation. Since the time he came into office at the end of the first world war, succeeding Sir Robert Borden, who had insisted on Canada signing the treaty of Versailles in its own right, he has witnessed and aided the growth of that nationhood of which we are all proud. While we remember Walpole as the first Prime Minister of Britain, the present Prime Minister of Canada will perhaps be remembered for many things, but one of them will be that, during his long term of office, Canada in very truth obtained recognition throughout the world as a sovereign nation.

Mr. J. H. BLACKMORE (Lethbridge): It affords the members of the Social Credit group, Mr. Speaker, great pleasure to be able to join with the other members of the house in congratulating the Prime Minister on this day. We congratulate him on his achievements as Prime Minister. He has been called upon to stand at the head of affairs in this nation while we have been passing through trying times. What is yet ahead, no one can tell. He may yet be called upon to render great service to this nation. In case he should be, we wish him health, strength and good spirits, that he may be able to discharge any other responsibilities he may be called upon to assume.

(Translation):

Right Hon. L. S. ST. LAURENT (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, it will seem fitting, I am sure, that a French-speaking voice should join with those we have just heard in extending to the Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) a tribute of admiration, affection, gratitude and warm wishes on this day when his term of office as leader of one of the Commonwealth states equals that of the prime minister who, before him, had headed one of these states longer than anyone else.

It is a fact worth recording because it illustrates not only the continuity of our prime minister's services but also the ease with which we adapt ourselves to the parliamentary system modelled on the long experience of Westminster:

The fathers of confederation gave us a constitution basically similar to that of the United Kingdom and, though our parliament has not yet existed a full 81 years, already one of its leaders has served as prime minister as long as any other in the several centuries since the foundation of the institution upon which our own is patterned.

[Mr. Coldwell.]

We have indeed cause to rejoice over such a fact just as we have cause to rejoice over the opportunity we are given today of extending our congratulations to the one who, more than anyone else in our nation, has contributed with such constancy in investing our parliament with the stamp of dignity, of stability, and with such substantial pledges for the future.

(Text):

Mr. T. L. CHURCH (Broadview): As a former head of the city of Toronto, Mr. Speaker, I wish to add a word of tribute to what has already been so well said by the others who have spoken today.

I think I have known the Prime Minister longer than almost any other person here in the house. I have always had a great deal of admiration and respect for him. I knew his father, who was a beloved professor in the law school when I attended it. I knew his mother, his father and all his family. I have always had a high regard for him personally, because of his kindness of heart to all his friends. I will say this about him. He has given a long life of able and brilliant service to our country. I am one of those in the house who has never allowed religion or politics to mix up with friendship.

I will always remember what his distinguished parents have done for this country. His grandfather was the first mayor of our city, in 1834. I was in Toronto the other day, and I may say that a large tablet is erected there marking his grandfather's grave. One of my last acts as head of the city was, I think, in December 1921. I remember his brother, who was a great member of the medical profession. His body arrived at the Union station, and as head of the city I accompanied it for burial. I have always remembered the kindness of heart of the Prime Minister.

Mr. JEAN-FRANÇOIS POULIOT (Témiscouata): It is refreshing, Mr. Speaker, to hear such speeches as these on an occasion like this. Mr. King has been my only leader for a long time, and perhaps he will be my only one; I do not know about that. He has been my leader most of the time, to the extent that my conscience permitted me to follow him.

There is one thing that I find quite unusual, and it lies in the calling to mind of the length of time a man has been in office; the time has seemed to be so short. Mr. King is still so youthful looking that it is hard to believe he has been here longer than Walpole—who has been dead for a long time—was prime minister of Britain. I do not think it is fair to compare