

The Address—Mr. Sevigny

Let us take, for instance, simultaneous interpretation, the appointment of a very distinguished French-speaking Canadian to the post of governor general; the solution to the problem which faced French Canadians as a result of the national census form; the satisfactory solution of the problem of assistance to the universities, a problem which our predecessors have never managed to solve. Now, let us say a word of the progress of bilingualism in all sectors of the federal administration, of the use made by the Prime Minister and of his colleagues of bilingual stationery, of the use of the French language in the orders and instructions given to the French-speaking units of our armed forces. Let us say a word also of the introduction of bilingual cheques, which had been claimed for a long time during the Liberal administration which preceded us, but which had always been refused to French-speaking Canadians.

And I could mention many other measures to prove that national unity is very dear to the Prime Minister, that it is the very basis of his political thought. Many were the other steps taken by the Conservative ministers from the province of Quebec who are so ably supported by the French-speaking members from Quebec, to give that province its fair share, thus carrying out the promises made during the election campaigns which led the Conservative party to victory in 1957 and 1958.

The Conservative party's achievements are great in the economic field. For instance, there is the construction of new airports, new wharves, new post offices, public buildings, the Champlain bridge, to say nothing of harbour improvements which total \$60 million.

We have introduced a bill for the construction of a railroad in the Gaspé peninsula. We have also undertaken negotiations for the abolition of tolls on the Jacques Cartier and Victoria bridges, a measure which has been requested for the past 30 years but which was always refused by the Liberals.

Thanks to the contracts awarded by the federal government and to the resulting sub-contracts, our industries are most active.

Indeed, the government's achievements are many and great, Mr. Speaker. Few are the ridings of our province which have not enjoyed exceptional advantages because of the energetic action taken by the Conservative members and ministers of the present government.

[Mr. Sevigny.]

Mr. Speaker, may I call it one o'clock?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Associate Minister of National Defence has called it one o'clock.

(Text):

At one o'clock the house took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at 2.30 p.m.

(Translation):

Mr. Sevigny: Mr. Speaker, before we took recess at one o'clock, I was saying that within the federal cabinet, the French-speaking ministers from the province of Quebec hold a position equal to that held by their English-speaking colleagues from Quebec and all the other provinces.

It is false to contend, Mr. Speaker, that our ministers from Quebec play a secondary role within the federal cabinet. It is too often contended by Liberal friends opposite that we are left in the background and that our responsibilities do not have the importance they should have considering the place that the province of Quebec holds within confederation. Nothing is farther from the truth.

Who, among members opposite could say that the transport department ably represented by the Hon. Leon Balcer, is a second rate department? On the contrary, that department is one of the most important on the federal scene and it is surely the one that gives its minister the greatest amount of work.

The Hon. Leon Balcer has fulfilled his task with competence and dignity. All those who have had matters to settle concerning railways, aeronautics, national harbours, etc., have nothing but praise for Mr. Balcer, who has been up to the confidence he was shown.

The defence production department, led by the Hon. Raymond O'Hurley, looks after defence purchases for the whole of Canada. Because of Mr. O'Hurley's initiative, for the first time since 1939, it may be said that his department has bought more in Canada than in the United States.

To fill the post of Secretary of State and chairman of the privy council, we have a lawyer of national repute, a great speaker