

Speech from the Throne

proud of their countries. I am equally sure that the Americans are proud of theirs. How much prouder should we be of this great country of ours, stretching from Newfoundland to British Columbia, which, while it may have many imperfections, has not as many as other countries in the world. Let us be proud of our forests and our mines. Let us be proud of our great wheat fields and modern cities. And even more than that, Mr. Speaker, let us be proud of our way of life. During the past year, stories have been circulated about an election that must be called according to our constitution in the foreseeable future. To the Prime Minister of Canada, I say this: Call it any time you want.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

• (1450)

Mr. Whicher: The results, as far as I am concerned, are a foregone conclusion. When the chips are down, the people of Canada will appreciate the good life that this government is allowing them to live.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Whicher: They will appreciate that Canada is certainly not a heaven; but it is the next thing to it on this whole earth. While I appreciate the fact that you will want to fight an election on the future of Canada, may I suggest that your government has, nothing to be ashamed of in either the past or the present. Like the Stampeders and the Canadiens, our Nancy Greenes and our Bobby Orrs, we are number one.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Trois-Rivières (Mr. Lajoie):

That an Address the text of which follows, be presented to His Excellency the Governor General of Canada:

To His Excellency the Right Hon. Roland Michener, Chancellor and Principal Companion of the Order of Canada, upon whom has been conferred the Canadian Forces' Decoration, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada.

May it please Your Excellency: We, Her Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the House of Commons of Canada, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Excellency for the gracious speech which Your Excellency has addressed to both Houses of Parliament.

Mr. Claude G. Lajoie (Trois-Rivières): Mr. Speaker, it was Benjamin Disraeli who once said, "I feel a very unusual sensation. If it is not an indigestion, I think it must be gratitude."

[*Translation*]

For a new member of the House a maiden speech is of special importance. I am deeply grateful for the honour bestowed upon me today of seconding the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne moved by my colleague, and I thank the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) for this honour which is reflected on my family and the whole constituency of Trois-Rivières.

I should like to pay a tribute to the people who elected me almost a year ago. I entered politics somewhat in spite of myself and had it not been for my admiration for the right hon. Prime Minister, I might not have come to it. His energy, wisdom and courage have won him the admiration of all, who see him as a distinguished leader. I am a proud member of his party. He has been at all times the

champion of Canadian unity, which is the key to our survival.

[*English*]

I have also promoted Canadian unity, and in this respect I have something in common with the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau)—but I did it 23 years before he did. My wife is also from Vancouver.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lajoie: The eight children in my family have learned both languages. Although my wife comes from God's country, she is perfectly at home in Trois-Rivières.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Mr. Lajoie: The constituency I have the honour to represent in this House was named by Jacques Cartier, the navigator who sailed up the St. Lawrence in 1535. However, there are only two rivers in our area, but the islands of la Potherie and Saint-Quentin, at the junction with the St. Lawrence and the St. Maurice Rivers, give the impression of three rivers. It is one of the occurrences in our regional history which one likes to mention.

The city of Trois-Rivières—the second in Canada—was founded in 1634, by the sieur de Laviolette. It was, at the outset, a starting point for the *coureurs de bois* like Radisson, whose legend still lives on. The first heavy industry in Canada was established there in 1729, under the name of Les Vieilles Forges, which were still in existence 154 years later, in 1883. As a matter of fact, the federal government has offered a million dollars to the Quebec government for their restoration.

Given its geographical situation, the city of Trois-Rivières was destined to become the capital of the pulp and paper industry. My constituency now includes three important cities, Trois-Rivières, Cap-de-la-Madeleine and Trois-Rivières-Ouest, comprising more than 100,000 people. Seventy five per cent of our population is made up of workers. I am myself a worker and I am proud of it. I built my first house myself and although I do not use the hammer anymore, I can still oversee a group of workers.

My constituency, an important industrial centre, includes 19 firms, with more than 200 employees each, and more than 100 other industries employing more than 3,000 people. Personal income in the three cities mentioned earlier amounts to \$208.5 million and retail sales total \$115.6 million. Our harbour ranks sixth in Canada. It is open the year round. Its mooring front runs almost 10,000 feet and last year it accommodated 1,194 ships, including 370 liners and 824 coasters. During 1970, 5,364,914 pounds of goods were handled there. Piers and sheds are linked by a five-mile railroad.

Last summer I had the honour of being a member of the delegation from Cap-de-la-Madeleine which went to Châteaudun, in France, to celebrate the establishment of those twin cities. The city of Cap-de-la-Madeleine gets its name from Jacques de Laferté, vicar of Sainte-Marie-Madeleine in Châteaudun, who was the first owner of the land on which the city was built. The granting of the status of town in 1918, and that of city in 1922, was the starting point of an era of development which has been going on ever since. The population of Cap-de-la-Madeleine is now 32,000.