

The Address—Mr. Frith

say No to this badly formulated invitation by the Quebec government.

A Yes would mean saying No to the efforts all the provinces are now willing to make to get out of the deadlock; a No to the ostensible PQ project would confirm our intention to carry on with our efforts to update and modernize the structures and institutions of our country. That they must be rejuvenated, no one will deny; but that they should unfairly be called obsolete and good for the trash can, never. To condemn as young a country as ours to death, when, as I said earlier, everything remains to be done, would be gross error of judgment.

The people of Rimouski-Témiscouata will never accept that so many struggles by so many generations might come to naught by soothsayings characterized by uncertainty and defeatism; we worked hard to get what we have today, but we choose to consider the results we have achieved rather than the inevitable constraints we had to put up with in order to get them. We did not run away from the advantageous contributions made by the other regions of our country. We have sought their contribution and made our own. But we did not give up.

Madam Speaker, to those who try to strengthen their specious argument by putting forward the prognosis formulated by our so-called "cousins" who deserted us two centuries ago, I shall reply that our Quebec will be neither French nor anything else but Canadian. Madam Speaker, I thank you for your worthy attention, and I move, seconded by the hon. member for Sudbury (Mr. Frith), that the following address be presented to His Excellency the Governor General of Canada:

To His Excellency the Right Honourable Edward Richard Schreyer, Chancellor and Principal Companion of the Order of Canada, Chancellor and Commander of the Order of Military Merit, 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.

● (1430)

[English]

Mr. Doug Frith (Sudbury): Madam Speaker, may I be the first to congratulate officially my colleague from the province of Quebec, the hon. member for Rimouski (Mrs. Côté), for having the honour to have been chosen to move the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

It is as well an honour and a privilege for me and the constituents of Sudbury to have the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) ask me to second the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Sudbury has been honoured in years past by having as its representative the previous Speaker of the House, the Hon.

James Jerome. I am certain that I speak for all members of the House when I congratulate him for the unbiased manner in which he presided over the House of Commons, and I wish him success in his new role as Associate Chief Justice of the Federal Court of Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Frith: I am equally certain that the traditions of this House will be upheld during your tenure as Speaker and that you will preside with the qualities mentioned by the Prime Minister when he selected a previous Speaker, Lucien Lamoureux. At that time he stated that a Speaker—

—must enjoy our respect without losing our affection. He must be firm yet sensitive, a master of language and a good listener . . . be prepared to cite a precedent, and to know when to distinguish it . . . He needs the skills of a judge and a diplomat. He should combine the talents of a tightrope walker, a juggler and, occasionally, a lion tamer.

Madam Speaker, I am certain you will be equal to the task.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

Mr. Frith: I was admittedly somewhat astounded when I was asked to deliver my maiden speech on the opening of Parliament. As all other new members, no doubt, I am proud of having been chosen by my constituents to represent and promote their interests within that ancient and noble institution which is Parliament.

[English]

By tradition a new member of Parliament, chosen to move or second the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne, describes the social, economic and cultural matrix of his constituency. Let me be brief. The Sudbury region is the geographic, business and cultural centre of northeastern Ontario. The region comprises some 165,000 people, houses the largest nickel producer in the world, the only university in northwestern Ontario, and provides excellent regional medical facilities to northern Ontario residents.

The ethnic breakdown of the regional population is approximately 37 per cent Francophone, 36 per cent Anglophone, a large Italian population, and a wide and exciting cross-section of other ethnic groups. In short, Sudbury is a microcosm of Canada.

The past three to four years have been difficult ones for Sudbury. As a result of slumping nickel markets, massive lay-offs occurred in 1977, and we have recently endured the effects of a long, protracted strike. I mention these facts because I believe that, as a result of these adversities and hardships, the Sudbury region has found innate values to weather the storm, and we can apply the lessons learned to the challenges facing Canada in the eighties.

The commencement of a decade has often been a time to reflect on the past and pursue programs for the future. In 1980 one message is crystal clear. This Parliament must institute proposals which will contribute long-term answers to regional disparities in our country and not simply apply band-aid solutions. This government must develop a comprehensive industrial strategy that albeit it will give very little comfort in