

*The Address—Mr. Dupuis*

organizations in the light of our own strategic position. As I said, our first duty is to Canada, then to NATO and the other organizations that may contribute to the preservation of democracy. As to our democratic parliamentary institutions, the best way to preserve them is to ensure the respect of parliament by the government in order that the people at large may respect it.

(Translation):

**Mr. Hector Dupuis (St. Mary):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to extend my most sincere congratulations to the member for Bellechasse (Mr. Picard) for the splendid speech he has just made in this house. I must admit he is truly an authority on the matters he has brought to the knowledge of his colleagues, and I congratulate him especially for his frankness and his adherence to the party to which he remains loyal in spite of the fact that sometimes he does not share the views of his party.

I can hardly omit mentioning the efforts made by the Speaker of this house to increase his knowledge of the French language.

In my maiden speech in the house I paid tribute to him for making it a duty, in all circumstances, to give the French language its rightful place in debates on the various matters brought to the attention of members of parliament.

Since, although it may be said that he is no longer of school age, the Speaker has taken lessons in the French language. I was both astonished and happy to find that, although he had but little time to learn it, he could speak fluently in my mother tongue.

This gesture should set an example to all our fellow citizens who, I am sure, must feel more and more convinced of the necessity of learning and using both official languages of the country.

I wish to congratulate the mover (Mr. Cauchon) and the seconder (Mr. Simmons) of the address in reply to the speech from the throne. Both have acquitted themselves admirably of this task.

I want to stress certain remarks made by the hon. member for Beauharnois about the gentleman who, with the assistance of his ministers, directs the destinies of Canada.

The eloquent member for Beauharnois has laid special emphasis, and rightly so, upon the firm determination of the Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) to ensure national unity, a determination against which will beat in vain the efforts of certain narrow-minded

fanatics who wish to appropriate for themselves alone the rights and privileges granted by the British North America Act and which they hold in contempt.

The Right Hon. Prime Minister, as I have already mentioned, will go down in history as a champion of legitimate collective and individual liberties and of national understanding, from sea to sea, within the confines of this great and now autonomous nation of ours.

At the risk of offending certain so-called ultra-loyalists who, fortunately, are becoming fewer and fewer and who have failed to understand what this autonomy means to the descendants of those who cleared the land in Canada, whether they be of English or French origin, I am not afraid to state that our country has reached its maturity and that, as such, it can now stride forward alone towards the bountiful future it has in store.

The prophecy of another compatriot, a most illustrious one, to the effect that the twentieth century would be Canada's, is already beginning to materialize.

Thanks to God, we have and we are developing natural resources and basic products that place us among the very first producing countries in the world.

But of what use would all this wealth be if we failed to take the necessary means to apply these resources methodically, if conditions were to become such as to paralyse all individual effort and initiative?

When we consider world conditions today, we can safely say that living conditions in Canada compare favourably with those in other countries.

The political party that now manages the affairs of this country, and has managed them longer than any other party, has always striven to establish social and economic conditions that are the envy of many other nations. Thanks to the progressive spirit which characterizes this party, the house has been able to enact social legislation to protect the workers and the underprivileged.

In fact, who will deny the huge benefits accruing to the majority of our fellow countrymen by the enactment of such laws as those on family allowances, unemployment insurance, pensions for the blind, not to mention the pending legislation on behalf of the disabled and others whose permanent disability prevents them from earning a living.

I recall that for many years the leaders and supporters of the official opposition party fought endlessly against these social reforms. They came round to them after having realized their beneficial effects, unless it was through wisdom, in the hope of being able to win the confidence of the electors.