

Royal Assent

On behalf of the official opposition I wish to extend to the Speaker of the house, to the Deputy Speaker, to the staff of the House of Commons and all those associated with them our best wishes for a very merry Christmas and the best of health and happiness in the coming year. As for our colleagues and associates on both sides of the house—we shall probably be seeing each other during the evening—I wish to all members of the House of Commons, wherever they may sit and to whatever party they belong, the very best of fortune in the coming year.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): I should just like to say, in reply to the remarks made by the Secretary of State (Mr. Pickersgill) that this has been a remarkable session of parliament. It began in uncertain circumstances. It could easily have been a most unproductive parliament. I think history may well show that it has been a remarkably productive parliament, though a parliament in which no party had a clear majority. I think this has been due to the fine co-operation which has existed in all parts of the house and to the diplomacy and patience of the Secretary of State, who has been the leader of the house for the government, and to our patience in putting up with him. I hope the press will notice that although it is close to Christmas and late at night there is a remarkably good attendance of members in the dying hours of this session.

I was measuring the representation qualitatively. I thought it was about evenly balanced. I should like on behalf of the members of this party to express to all members in all parts of the house, to the staff and to the members of the press gallery our best wishes for a merry Christmas.

Mr. Bert Leboe (Cariboo): Without being repetitious I should like to associate myself with the remarks of the hon. members who have spoken and to wish everyone a very merry Christmas and a happy new year. We shall be looking forward to some real results when the next session comes round.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gerard Perron (Beauce): Mr. Speaker, since our group has been recognized, may I, on behalf of the members of the Ralliement Crèdistes, in spite of the fact that some are absent, join with the other members who spoke before me and wish to the staff of the House of Commons, to all our colleagues from the various regions of Canada, and to all the people of Canada, peace on earth and good will to men, wherever they may be.

[Mr. Nowlan.]

[*Text*]

Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Minister of Justice): Would you allow me to say a final word in the absence of the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) who, I am sure, would have said something had he been here. He is in the other place.

Mr. Douglas: Permanently?

Mr. Chevrier: I am sure no one in the house would want him to be in any other place but this one.

Mr. Douglas: Let me say to the minister that there is a scripture which says: I go to prepare a place for you.

Mr. Chevrier: I do not know what the hon. gentleman has in mind but I have a feeling he must be referring to someone else. Be that as it may, I do want, on behalf of the Prime Minister to thank those of you who were so kind as to express good wishes and congratulations on this occasion. I should like to join with those who have preceded me in paying a special tribute to the Speaker of the house for his patience, to the Deputy Speaker and to those who are on his staff, to the members of the press gallery, to the staff generally and to all those who are responsible for the administration of the House of Commons.

I think, too, I would be remiss in my duty—and I am sure no one will take offence at this—if I omitted to say a special word of commendation to the leader of the house for the manner in which he has acted as a negotiator in many of the problems and difficulties which arose. I am sure this would not have been possible, especially since my hon. friend has not occupied this particular position before, had it not been for the co-operation he received from the house leaders on the other side—the house leader of the official opposition, as well as the leaders of the various other groups.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not convey to the house our appreciation for your work and for the work of all those who are responsible for the administration of the house.

If I speak a little longer than usual, it is because we have a few minutes to go before the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod arrives.

I take the occasion to wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

I extend the same wishes to all my colleagues on both sides of the house, and I would add "*le paradis à la fin de leurs jours*".

[*Text*]

Mr. Pickersgill: I wonder if Your Honour would consider suspending the sitting at the