

The Address—Mr. Mazankowski

respect to an agreement between that government and the Shaheen Natural Resources Company?

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Perhaps I can answer that question by saying no.

CANADA ELECTIONS ACT**CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF FORMER CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the President of the Privy Council. Can we be assured that the government will give early study to the recommendations made by Mr. Castonguay concerning absentee voting and a permanent or continuous voters' list?

May I also ask whether there is a possibility of these recommendations being referred to a committee of this house?

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (President of the Privy Council): As I said to the house earlier this week, or perhaps late last week, the government is currently considering some means of enabling hon. members generally to give attention to this question. I hope to be able to announce a date on an early occasion.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**CONTINUATION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY**

The house resumed from Tuesday, September 17, consideration of the motion of Mr. Eymard Corbin for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his speech at the opening of the session, and the amendment (p. 62) thereto of Mr. Stanfield.

• (3:30 p.m.)

Mr. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, may I first offer you my very sincere congratulations upon your re-election as presiding officer of the House of Commons. The accolades that have been extended to you over the past few days well express the feelings of the members of this distinguished house. May I also extend felicitations to your assistant, the Deputy Speaker, and to the Deputy Chairman of Committees. They too, I know, will preside properly and wisely over the deliberations of this chamber.

I wish to take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to bring you greetings from my constituents in the electoral district of Vegreville, and particularly from the centennial capital of

[Mr. Lundrigan.]

Canada, St. Paul, Alberta. This patriotic town engaged in over 100 centennial projects to commemorate Canada's 100th birthday, ranging from the opening of a recreational centre to the building of a launching pad for objects from outer space. I am deeply honoured and grateful to have been chosen to represent this great riding, a riding which contains people of vision, enthusiasm and dedication.

As we are debating the address in reply to the speech from the throne I shall confine my remarks generally to a discussion of manner in which the throne speech affects the constituency I represent. The Vegreville constituency is an area in east central Alberta comprising 9,000 square miles and containing in excess of 65,000 industrious people who are of all origins, including the two founding peoples, French and English, and the first Canadians, our native Indians. Regrettably, in a throne speech which is dedicated to a just society no mention is made of the ethnic groups which constitute such an industrious, cultural and dedicated group of Canadians throughout the nation. I hope that this does not mean that these people are to be treated as second class citizens.

My presence in this house during the deliberations which are forthcoming will be to ensure that these people will enjoy equal rights and privileges, equal opportunity, never again to be caught in the web of limitations as was the case before the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) removed the barrier by proclaiming the Bill of Rights.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Mazankowski: These people believe in and want one Canada, united, with no special status, no special favours. All they want is equality. The throne speech in no way gives these people that assurance.

Representing an agricultural area, Mr. Speaker, I would like to devote some time to outlining some of the difficulties that are being faced by the farmers in my constituency, as well as by those in other parts of western Canada. I would first like to offer my sincere congratulations to my hon. friend from Medicine Hat (Mr. Olson) on his appointment as Minister of Agriculture. It is very pleasing to know that some consideration has been given our fair province by his appointment to this very important portfolio.

In a rural constituency such as Vegreville the economic pulse of all our communities is