

The Address—Mr. Cafik

• (12:20 p.m.)

Mr. Norman A. Cafik (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker), leaders of the opposition parties, and hon. members on both sides of the house: May I join with previous speakers in offering my congratulations to the Speaker of this House of Commons on his unique election to this high and distinguished office. I should also like to congratulate the Deputy Speaker, who happens to come from my area. I affirm that the people of that area are justly proud of his achievement in being appointed Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons. May I also congratulate the hon. member for Madawaska-Victoria (Mr. Corbin), who moved the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, and the seconder, the hon. member for Kamloops-Cariboo (Mr. Marchand).

I wish also to take this opportunity to congratulate the Prime Minister upon his electoral success which enabled him to form the first majority government since the election of 1958. This accomplishment, which has eluded so many since that time, is a certain indication that the people of Canada expect great things from our new Prime Minister. It has been said that the people of a country receive the government they deserve. I think the people of Canada deserve the very best and I believe they have it.

It is with a deep sense of pride and honour that I address myself to the House of Commons today in the throne speech debate. At the outset I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the people of Ontario riding who have given me the privilege of being a member of this twenty-eighth parliament. I wish also to assure them publicly that I shall do everything in my power to be worthy of the confidence they have placed in me.

In this debate all three opposition parties have moved non-confidence in the government. As a direct result they have tied up this house for seven days in what I consider to be a ceremonial debate which in my view does not further the cause of parliament or of the Canadian people whom we are here to serve. I realize it is traditional to go through this ritual, but if it were dispensed with perhaps parliament would be held in much higher regard by the Canadian people.

I feel that we would perhaps behave a little differently if in the galleries of this house all the Canadian people could be present and see

[Mr. Bigg.]

us acting on their behalf and doing the job for which we are being paid. I do not believe that by going through this debate we are serving any useful purpose. I wonder whether the opposition in moving its want of confidence motion really wished to defeat the government which the Canadian people elected on June 25. I do not believe they did. I really do not think they are willing to go back to the people at this moment of time to seek a mandate for themselves. I believe that the whole debate and their approach to it are an indication of their lack of regard and respect for the decision the Canadian people made on that date.

It is interesting to note that these seven days, by my calculation, have probably cost the government and hence the Canadian people approximately \$1 million. What have we done? The opposition parties say that we must get to work. They say that the throne speech was a disappointment. They say that we have unemployment and a housing crisis. All these things are true. If we are genuinely concerned about serving the people we should dispense with this debate and get on with the business at hand so that we can deal with the problems which everyone on this side of the house wishes to deal with effectively.

If I might turn for a moment to the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), he included in his remarks a statement that the government of this country is unworthy of the great confidence the Canadian people have placed in it. Personally I would rather rely on the collective wisdom of the Canadian people, as exercised at the ballot box, than I would on the judgment of the Leader of the Opposition who has a vested interest in being critical for criticism's sake.

Second, for some unknown reason which I do not understand he related this government to that of the beloved John F. Kennedy and found it to be lacking in comparison. We all loved Kennedy, I believe, but I do not think the leader of the Liberal party and Prime Minister of this country needs to take a second seat to any man, including that man whom we loved so much.

The Leader of the Opposition went on to point out that during the last election his party did not traffic in simple solutions. I do not know what justification there was for that statement, but there must have been some psychological reason for his using the word "traffic" in the first place. Perhaps it was because he was envious of the crowds and the traffic that surrounded the Prime Minister