

cious occasion does indeed provide an honour and a privilege for me as a citizen of our great and growing nation. In my view, there is no single greater honour that can befall a native of his country than to be given the opportunity to rise and speak—without fear or favour—before the duly elected governing assembly consisting of his fellow countrymen from all parts and corners of the nation.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, it is an event which neither I, nor my family, nor I trust the electors of the riding of Scarborough West who elected me on July 8 last, will ever forget.

[English]

Mr. Speaker, with my particular political and community background, this occasion represents to me the focal point of the democratic process in our country in action.

I should like first to offer my congratulations through you to the hon. member for Sudbury (Mr. Jerome) on his election to the most distinguished and historic post that he occupies as chairman of this assembly. As a new member of parliament, I was most impressed with the background to this important office that was provided by the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) during his nomination address, and by the distinguished member from Sudbury in his speech of acceptance. In my view, Mr. Speaker, Canadians would be well served by an effort on the part of your office to publicize some of the interesting details and background of the significant role occupied in our governing process by the Speaker of the House of Commons.

[Translation]

To you, Mr. Speaker, member for Beauharnois-Salaberry (Mr. Laniel), I offer my most sincere congratulations on your appointment as Deputy Speaker for another session.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to offer my congratulations to the hon. member for Louis-Hébert (Mrs. Morin) who, I am told, is the first woman ever to sit as Speaker of this House.

Her appointment is of particular importance to me for the hon. member represents the riding where, as a young Canadian of 22, I voted for the first time. That area is also the one where I was born and spent the first few years of my youth.

To the mover of the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne I want to express my congratulations for a job well done. I remember how in Montmorency, Quebec, where I lived for a while as a youth, I had considerable trouble in obtaining for my father the names of the candidates in the elections. I felt that, at the time, there was little information available on elections, especially federal.

● (1700)

[English]

Finally, Mr. Speaker, to the seconder of the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, I want to pay particular congratulations, not only for an inspiring speech made by a fellow new member but also on his election as a Canadian of a lineage that has played such an important part in building the fabric of our national society over these past 100 years, yet lies outside the area of the three main groups—French, English and North American Indi-

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an—that are so often assigned all the credit associated with the background of our great country. I refer to the Chinese element in our Canadian society, of which the hon. member has the distinction of being a direct descendant.

Speaking as a newly elected member of the Parliament of Canada, I want also to pay homage and show respect to two members of this House who, between them, have a combined term of service in our parliament in excess of 60 years. I refer, of course, to the dean of parliament, the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) and former Prime Minister of Canada and, if I may use the term, to the vice-dean and revered parliamentarian, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles). It is one thing to be elected and re-elected to this House when representing the party that forms the government of the day; it is quite another story, I would suggest, to accomplish this feat over and over again when representing parties on the opposition side of the House. Mr. Speaker, the record of these two hon. members speaks for itself and in each case is an example of considerable significance to a newcomer such as myself.

I want to speak today in this debate on several issues that are of particular concern to me. The first of these relates to the state of our Canadian economy at this time as it affects the individual householder in my riding of Scarborough West. My constituents are, by and large, confused and concerned over the seemingly opposite economic trends that are developing in our Canadian society. On the one hand we are continuing to experience the seemingly insatiable thrust of the inflationary spiral which is producing such a significant effect on all householders, particularly on those who must rely on relatively fixed incomes or on incomes that are not subject to the same kinds of upward revisions generally assured to those members of the labour force who belong to well organized unions or other forms of employee associations. On the other hand we are seeing injected into this unpleasant and difficult situation the knowledge that our economy is no longer expanding at a rate to which Canadians have tended to become accustomed on a more or less regular basis, with some minor exceptions, since the days of World War II.

This is a most unusual and difficult problem. The hope is, obviously, that appropriate fiscal actions on the part of all levels of government—federal, provincial and municipal—coupled with natural corrections that will ultimately evolve in the marketplace, will suffice to see us through without serious dislocation of the existing economic framework that has been built up around our society over these past 30 years. Looking at the situation in realistic terms does, however, lead one to a legitimate concern as to just how long our Canadian and worldwide economies can continue at 1974 and projected 1975 rates of inflation before experiencing corrective measures whose ramifications might be felt over several years into the future.

There are no “instant pudding” solutions to the problem that we all recognize reaches well beyond the borders of Canada and North America and is clearly worldwide in nature. The important point, in my view, is that all levels of government, both within and without Canada, recognize the seriousness of the situation and attempt jointly to