

Mr. COLDWELL: We want to have a firm understanding about the position. I think the Prime Minister gave it correctly.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Yes.

Mr. COLDWELL: I am just trying to emphasize the point.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: We go on now to the debate on the address.

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S SPEECH

ADDRESS IN REPLY, MOVED BY MR. J. A. DION
(LAKE ST. JOHN-ROBERVAL) AND SECONDED
BY MR. J. H. DICKEY (HALIFAX)

The house proceeded to the consideration of the speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor General at the opening of the session.

(Translation):

Mr. J. A. DION (Lake St. John-Roberval): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to move, seconded by the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Dickey):

That the following address be presented to His Excellency the Governor General of Canada: May it Please Your Excellency:

We, His Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the House of Commons of Canada, in parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Excellency for the gracious speech which Your Excellency has addressed to both houses of parliament.

Mr. Speaker, may I, at the outset, tender to the right honourable the prime minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) on behalf of the worthy people of Lake St. John-Roberval, heartfelt thanks for the honour which befalls them today.

An hon. MEMBER: Hear, hear.

Mr. DION: Indeed, when I was requested to move concurrence in the address in reply to the speech from the throne, I instantly realized that such an honour was less directed to my humble self than to the people of the interesting district I represent in this house. That is why I gladly accepted on behalf of my electors, the task now entrusted to me.

An hon. MEMBER: Hear, hear.

Mr. DION: Because the form of the speech delivered by the mover of the address in reply has been fairly well established by rather venerable and eminently respectable parliamentary traditions, I shall therefore follow it as closely as possible.

I shall first say a few words about my constituency and my electors; later dwelling on important events which transpired since the last session, and finally I shall deal with the policy outlined by the government in the speech from the throne. All this I shall attempt to do without overstraining your patience, nor taking too much of the valuable time of this house.

Mr. Speaker, the Lake St. John-Roberval district was discovered on June 24, 1647. This year we commemorated the centenary of that event by elaborate celebrations lasting many days. It was indeed in June 1647 that missionary Jean DeQuen, with two Indians of the Montagnais tribe, reached the now historic site of the Metabetchouan post. Father DeQuen, who had left Tadoussac a few days before, travelled up the dark and majestic Saguenay and, after many portages, beheld what is in truth an inland sea. He was the first white man to reach that lonely area.

In the years that followed, the region remained desolate and the forests lost none of their primeval character. Fur traders and missionaries were the only civilized people who ventured into the Saguenay and Lake St. John region. Not for almost two centuries later was this fertile land cleared and open to settlement.

In 1838, the *Société des Vingt-et-un colons de Charlevoix* (Twenty-One Colonists' Society of Charlevoix) undertook to open to agriculture the Chicoutimi District. In 1851, the *Société de Colonisation de l'Islet et de Kamouraska* (L'Islet and Kamouraska Colonization Society), under the direction of Parish Priest Hébert and Father Pilote, decided to open up lands on the shores of Lake St. John. Thus, Notre Dame d'Hébertville, the first rural parish, was established. From then on, the clearing of land made rapid progress and now, more than 50 rural parishes, wealthy and prosperous, flourish all around Lake St. John. The rich alluvial lands which make up most of the Lake St. John basin are especially favourable to agricultural endeavours. Dairy farming and cattle raising have flourished in that district. Lake St. John cheese is at a premium on both the Canadian and British markets. One can say that in our district, agriculture is well on its way to prosperity, even if at present it is feeling the counter-stroke brought about by the scarcity and high cost of feed grains. Our farmers hope, however, that this uneasiness is only temporary and that it will be remedied by appropriate measures in the least possible delay.