

social measures; they are retroactive to the first of February. Consequently, if the speech from the throne had been completed, that is four days later, this government would have obtained the confidence of the house, and it could then have had those measures approved after having obtained the vote of confidence, which is a normal procedure in our democratic institutions.

Consequently, since I wanted to wish a happy New Year to the members, to the ministers and to yourself, Mr. Speaker, I will take a leaf out of the government's book and offer you my best wishes with retroactive effect.

These session openings have had one good thing, especially these last four years, in that they allowed members to find out what kind of ministers they have, to see them in a group, and finally to know who are those who head such and such a department, because, as you know, there have been many changes in the Conservative ranks in the last six months.

And then you know also that our ministers are great travellers, beginning with the Prime Minister himself.

Some newspapers even claim that last year the Prime Minister travelled 100,000 miles, while some of his ministers were in Egypt, others in Israel, others in Japan, Mexico and in the Cameroons.

I fail to understand them; they don't miss a single event outside the country; be it a conference, a centennial celebration or even a stag party. There are more ministers abroad than here when there are important meetings in this country.

Take for instance my friend the Postmaster General (Mr. Hamilton), when hundreds of people gather to meet him, he is always absent; sometimes, he is in the Cameroons, some other time in Nigeria, etc.

So, if the Prime Minister has reached his one hundred thousandth mile, I submit he should consider changing his engine.

I think there must be some carbon on his pistons.

(Text):

Mr. Pallett: It is a low grade of gas the hon. member is using in his motor.

(Translation):

Mr. Denis: I am not the one who says it; it is some of our great Canadian cartoonists; here is a sample by one of them. Good Canadian citizens are looking up in the air while planes are criss-crossing the skies, and one of them says:

(Text):

Heck, no! that ain't the entire air force on the move. That's just Diefenbaker flying back 'n' forth all over th' country.

(Translation):

I am not the only one to notice that situation. I commend the government for having opened the session here in Ottawa. I think it is the most suitable place for that.

Our ministers started the habit of meeting everywhere. They went to Quebec. I do not know whether it is because of the resulting fiasco, but we heard that the next meeting of the cabinet would be held at St. Pierre les Becquets. To announce what? Useful things? To announce "bread and games" as would say the hon. Associate Minister of National Defence (Mr. Sevigny), honorary appointments to the privy council, etc.

Mr. Pigeon: Surely not two flags like your leader.

Mr. Denis: Mr. Speaker, I feel that the new Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys (Mr. Flynn) was privileged in that the whole federal cabinet displaced itself for his appointment. By the way, I heartily congratulate him, because I know he is competent. He well deserves the praise which was given to him; I suppose so and I venture to think so. But I think that the government has overlooked his talents too long and that his appointment comes too late. As a matter of fact, the next general election is only a month or two away. If the minister is so intelligent and talented, why has the present government not appointed him earlier.

It is not that there was no room in the cabinet, since it was rumoured that certain ministers would be replaced by others. At all events, I congratulate the new Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys, but I still feel that his appointment was only a show, mere window dressing.

The whole cabinet was displaced, including the present Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys, the Minister of Transport (Mr. Balcer)—who were probably with their families or here in Ottawa—to inform the public of a simple routine matter, merely an appointment to the privy council.

If at least on the occasion of that great pilgrimage, the Prime Minister had confirmed the Associate Minister of National Defence in his duties, he might have had some success, some publicity. If at least the Prime Minister had announced the appointment of the hon. member for Roberval (Mr. Tremblay) as chairman of the centennial celebrations, well and good.

Mr. Tremblay: Now he does me the honour of naming me.

Mr. Denis: I am glad—

Mr. Tremblay: Idiot.