

kenzie) in regard to veterans housing, and on behalf of the electors of the historic constituency of Drummond-Arthabaska, which I have the honour to represent in the Canadian House of Commons, I wish to congratulate him most heartily.

Availing myself of your customary kindness, Mr. Speaker, I shall continue my speech in French, the language of my forebears, and conclude it in English in order to show my esteem and regard for my English-speaking fellow members, from whom I have received so many marks of kindness and consideration since I entered parliament.

(Translation):

Mr. Speaker, ever since my election as member for Drummond-Arthabaska, a constituency which has had outstanding representatives, it had been my wont to deliver one speech in the course of each session. To those who may be wondering why I have not risen in my place since I was reelected in 1945, I may say that, owing to my esteem and consideration for my new fellow-members, I felt I could wait, thus affording them the opportunity of stating their views and their policy. I avail myself of this occasion to pay a tribute to the present members, who form the finest body which, so it seems to me, we have had for a number of years.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot but take advantage of this opportunity to extend to you the customary congratulations and to tell you that every citizen in the fine constituency of Drummond-Arthabaska was as delighted as I have been when you were called upon to fulfil the high functions of Speaker of this house. No better choice could have been made. As a grandson of the great Honoré Mercier, you have, through your talents, your personality and your industry, attained the high post which you occupy with so much dignity. You may be assured of the best wishes of all the electors of my constituency and myself.

May I sincerely compliment the mover and the seconder of the address in reply to the speech from the throne. The hon. member for Prince has performed his task in a most admirable manner, and I could hardly tell how glad I was to note the truly Canadian spirit he evidenced in speaking as well as he did the language of my ancestors.

As regards the seconder, I knew beforehand that he would be equal to the task, as I had frequently had occasion to admire him in political contests. I knew that he would make good use of his eloquence and that he

[Mr. Cloutier.]

would win the plaudits of all members of this house through his gentlemanly qualities and his quite personal appeal.

I am now constrained to introduce a note of sadness. I cannot forgo this opportunity of paying a tribute to a great Canadian, who was minister for my district and whose death is lamented by all. I have known and esteemed him and he has often given me sound advice. I am referring to that great Canadian, the late lamented Hon. P. J. A. Cardin. His thirty-five years of active political life will ensure him an honoured place in the history of this country. During his splendid and fruitful career, Hon. Mr. Cardin enjoyed the respect of all, because he was always upright and sincere. He had firm principles and his courage was indomitable. The sterling qualities which made him a beloved and respected leader will always cause him to be cited as an example. His name will live in history, with the radiant qualities of heart and mind of a great statesman. Through his ability, his eloquence and his powerful mind, he rose step by step in the political sphere and attained the highest functions in the federal administration. While proud, he was never haughty and to him honours were of minor importance, as against the respect of his principles and the interest of his fellow-citizens. I was deeply moved when I saw his noble countenance immobilized by death, but still keeping an expression of gentleness and firmness. I felt I still heard his musical voice, his eloquent words, when I pondered the heavy loss his death meant for his compatriots and all Canadians. Now that he has left for the great beyond, many among those who knew him less will better realize the important and patriotic part he has played in our public life. His memory will endure and his life will remain a symbol, an unforgettable example of public spirit and devotion.

The population of the constituency of Drummond-Arthabaska is made up of the two best elements that can be found, as it includes both farmers and workers. We know what an asset the land is for a country, and what vitality the people derive from it. The farmers in our district keep on, peacefully but without respite in this twentieth century, ploughing the toilsome and everlasting furrow which was begun in the seventeenth century by the settlers of Richelieu, Colbert and Talon.

As regards the workers, I feel quite close to them, because for nearly twenty-one years I was paymaster, accountant and statistician for the Drummondville Cotton Co., which is