

On August 24, 1949, on the recommendation of the Prime Minister of Canada, the Hon. Eugène Marquis was appointed to the Superior Court of Quebec, of which he would eventually become the associate chief justice.

Mr. Marquis's legal career spanned both criminal and civil law, and whether on the bench or in private practice, whether representing the State or the Attorney General, his great humanity was recognized by all.

I have the honour of having four parishes in common with Mr. Marquis, parishes that were in his riding when he was a member of Parliament and have now become part of the riding of Bellechasse: Saint-Damase-des-Aulnaies, Tourville, Sainte-Perpétue and Saint-Omer. Eugène Marquis was also an active member of the Knights of Columbus, making a valuable contribution to the furtherance of this organization's social mission.

To his children, Monique, Louise, Yves, Michel and Jean, I offer my deepest sympathy, as well as to his colleagues from the Barreau du Québec and all those who worked with him in the judicial system in Quebec and Canada.

• (1540)

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I too would like to express the sorrow of members in our party on the death of Mr. Marquis. I do know that the hon. member for Bellechasse is that gentleman's nephew. I am sorry for him, his family and the family of the deceased that this event happened today. I extend to the hon. member all the respect which members of this House have for former members and that certainly applies to this member for Kamouraska who served his country well a long time ago. I offer the sincere condolences of all members on this side of the House to his family.

[English]

Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise on behalf of my colleagues in the Reform caucus to also express our sympathies to the family on the passing of a former member of the House of Commons, Mr. Eugene Marquis.

Although no one from our caucus has known him, I do know that Mr. Marquis was a farmer and those of us who are farmers share a kindred spirit. We do express our sympathies on behalf of our caucus to the members of his family. We also know that he was committed to Canada, a strong united Canada, before we perhaps got entangled in some of the more recent concerns in Canadian history. We all salute the former member for his contribution to the country and his commitment to it.

Government Orders

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: I too would like to convey my deepest sympathy to the family of one of our former colleagues.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

DEPARTMENT OF CANADIAN HERITAGE ACT

The House resumed from November 15 consideration of the motion that Bill C-53, an act to establish the Department of Canadian Heritage and to amend and repeal certain other acts, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to resume debate on Bill C-53, an act to establish the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Although the proposed legislation will officially establish in law this new department, more than a year has gone by since the department was formed from the components of no less than five different federal departments. This exercise we are going through is part of this government's effort to streamline the way the federal system is organized.

That interim period between the practical establishment of the new department and the present regulatory establishment of it has, to say the least, proved to be very interesting and challenging not only for the new department but for the government and for the entire country.

The different sectors of Canadian heritage have had to get used to their new organizational relationships. In many cases this has meant breaking established links with their former organizations and forming new ones with the various entities brought together to create the new Department of Canadian Heritage.

To take one example which interests me, let us look at Parks Canada. Formally a part of Environment Canada, Parks Canada is now a vital and active member of the new ministry. Parks Canada is the steward of our national parks and our national historic sites which collectively represent some of our most precious natural and cultural heritage resources.

Some have questioned the move of parks to Canadian Heritage. In my view it makes good sense to have the program of Parks Canada housed in a department devoted to our heritage.

• (1545)

The historic sites and national parks are tangible expressions of our culture and the geographical realities that have helped to instil in Canadians a unique perspective on the natural environment.