

25 mars 1966, Pointe-Claire

Chambre de commerce de la région du Lakeshore

When your representative in the House asked me to accept your kind invitation to address you tonight, she used as one of her arguments that, according to her, I had never officially addressed a local organization in her constituency... She did not need to use any specific argument as I was going to accept anyway: I find it an almost impossible venture to refuse anything to Mrs. Casgrain. My minister of Roads and myself, for instance, keep realizing budget after budget that somehow or other the allocation of funds for the county of Jacques Cartier always reach very impressive figures.

Referring back to Mrs. Casgrain's argument, when she wanted to convince me to accept your invitation, may I point out that I could easily have answered that the riding of Jacques Cartier is one I have visited most frequently in recent years: I must have attended a good dozen of inaugurations of new buildings in this constituency. Industry is to such an extent mushrooming that your area is well in the process of becoming Montreal's own golden belt as well as one of the most attractive residential communities on the island.

Which brings me to speak to you, members of a Chamber of Commerce, of the tremendous economic and social impact of that magnificent section of the Trans-Canadienne and the approaches to the Mercier Bridge (the south west end portion of the island).

I can safely say that the investment of the Government in the Trans-Canada Highway extending from Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue to Côte de Liesse and including the Mercier Bridge approaches has been more than justified by its social and economic impact, not only in the riding of Jacques Cartier as it stood before last year's redistribution but on the island and even on La Belle Province. The portion of the Trans-Canada Highway which I just described necessitated an investment of over \$27000000 and if we include the Île aux-Tourtes Bridge and the interchange access road to Mercier Bridge the global investment adds up to more than \$59000000. Need I remind you that the plans for the TransCanada Highway were changed by the Quebec Government from a four lane to a six lane divided highway. The additional cost was borne by our government.

The new access road to Mercier Bridge will have a profound influence on the LaSalle, St-Pierre and Lachine industrial structure. The diversion of traffic flow from Lafleur avenue accelerates the transport of finished products, thus reducing inventories of market oriented firms using extensive road transport.

The diversified pool of manpower from the Montreal area now has easier access to the LaSalle industries.

The interchange in Dorval coupled with the widening and relocation of Côte de Liesse as well as the construction of overpasses will give the Metropolitan Boulevard a new dimension while relieving the congestion on local roads in this City. As an illustration may I point out that the commercial and industrial assessment grew from 23 % in 1960 to 33 % in 1965

The Pointe Claire industrial core at the present time is much the same as in Dorval with more emphasis however on warehousing and distribution centers.

Eighteen firms located in Pointe Claire between 1956 and 1960. Between 1961, the starting date of the Trans-Canada Highway construction, and 1965, 51 new plants were built.

The commercial and industrial assessment in this city grew from 20% in 1962 to 33% in 1965, thus showing an important increase. The Trans-Canada Highway has already a positive effect on Dorval and Pointe Claire. This impact is moving westward on the Island and the other communities will witness the same effects in the near future.

The positive effect of the Trans-Canada Highway is moving westward toward Beaconsfield, Baie d'Urfé, Ste-Anne-de Bellevue and the north shore municipalities. All these cities adjacent to the new freeway are planning industrial parks to take full advantage of the new opportunities created.

The Trans-Canada Highway canalizes the industrial activity in the interior of the Island and orients the peripheral land towards a residential use.

I wish to talk now about the Quebec official road signs system: a highly controversial subject in some quarters. There are 177 road signs of which 110 are symbolic and easily understood by anyone whatever his maternal tongue may be; 58 are bilingual, 9 are unilingual French. Of these nine, four represent the cardinal points which are written and sound like English. The others describe areas and geographic areas which should not be translated be they French or English.

The purpose of the symbolic sign system is obvious and its advantages are well recognized in Europe and in the world.

Symbol signing is being developed as rapidly as possible in this Province. Where important directions cannot be given symbolically or in two languages, then we use the language of the majority in the Province. May I assure you however that our search for symbols, the highway esperanto of the future, is continuing.

Montreal is not only the Canadian metropolis but it has been put on the map of internationally known and visited capitals of the world by its bi-cultural characteristics, its economic power and the coming EXPO '67. Montreal is the area of the Province most in need of a road sign system that is standardized throughout the world and understood by every visitor. You, of the West end, are living in this area. It is no longer your own life in your own town. You must realize that you are part of the metropolis of Canada which is cosmopolitan and formed mainly by two ethnic groups. A metropolis which is the second largest French-speaking city of the entire world.

When my Government came into power in 1960, we set out to promote the economic development of the Province. In order to meet the normal needs of the Canadian metropolis, we have devoted tremendous energies and invested considerable amounts of money on the Island of Montreal. With the advent of Expo '67, we have spared no effort and no energy in

insuring that the island would be up to World Exhibitions standards, bearing in mind that Expo '67 will promote economic development of Quebec and Canada as a whole.

We have assumed the cost of construction of highways and overpasses. We have attempted and indeed we have succeeded in developing on and around the island one of the most modern road complexes in this country with the advent of Expo '67, Montreal is encreasing its prestige as an internationally known city. The economic deve lopment of the island is not only serving the cause of Montreal and the Province but also serving the cause of Canada 1967 will be the year of Confederationa It will be a year of soul searching and of examination of the destiny of Canada. With the development of the Metropolis, with the advent of Expo and the influx of visitors from all over the world, it is in Montreal, in the heart of the country, that Canadians will, I hope, acquire a new sense of what the real meaning of Canadian citizenship should be in this city which will become the meeting place of our nation.

Je viens de vous parler du renouveau du Québec. N'est-il pas vrai qu'il s'illustre avec un relief particulièrement saisissant ici même dans cette région que vous habitez et dans laquelle vous exercez vos professions ?

Voyez la route transcanadienne et sa jonction avec l'autoroute du Nord, voyez les approches du pont Mercier et les autres travaux de Voirie. Depuis une couple d'années, le visiteur de passage dans votre partie de l'île de Montréal doit avoir l'impression de traverser un immense chantier.

En plus de nombreuses réalisations de voies routières, de ce grandiose éventail de routes et d'autoroutes – (et dans une certaine mesure, devrais-je dire, à cause même de ces travaux) – de nouvelles entreprises sont attirées dans chacune de vos villes.

La poussée industrielle se fait déjà sentir à LaSalle, Lachine, Dorval et Pointe-Claire; elle gagnera vers l'ouest pourvu que l'on sache s'y préparer Le temps d'une conception régionale de l'urbanisme est venu chez vous: dans la mesure où l'on saura allier les exigences des parcs industriels et les besoins des zones résidentielles, le progrès de votre partie de l'île ne peut manquer de s'accroître très rapidement.

Soutenu d'un côté par un réseau routier exceptionnellement favorable, appuyé de l'autre par l'esprit d'entreprise dont l'Exposition Universelle de 1967 n'est qu'une illustration, vos initiatives de développement communautaire sont promises à un bel avenir.

Le vent est dans les voiles. Et il en est ainsi pour tout le territoire qui est l'héritage commun des Québécois, qu'ils soient de langue française ou de langue anglaise.

Au stade d'évolution que la province a maintenant atteint, il est devenu notoire à l'échelle du pays et du continent -je dirais même du monde occidental que le Québec est en train de réussir une montée économique et sociale dont on n'osait pas même rêver voici peu d'années encore. Certes les problèmes demeurent à la fois nombreux et sérieux, mais l'essor représente aujourd'hui un acquis définitif. Nos concitoyens ont fait la preuve à la fois de leur potentiel et de leur dynamisme. J'ai la fierté de dire que le gouvernement s'est montré d'avant-garde, qu'il s'est révélé en plusieurs domaines l'initiateur hardi du renouveau dont profite toute la population.

As members of the Chambers of Commerce of the west end of the island of Montreal you are vitally concerned with all aspects of the economic development of the province. But as citizens, taxpayers and the fathers of thousands of children growing up in a new Quebec —and here I am addressing myself particularly to my English-language listeners who represent the majority of this audience — you have often pondered the causes and consequences of Quebec's quiet revolution as it affects your family, your neighbourhood and your community.

How many of you, have been witnessing the sometimes awesome spectacle of a Quebec on the move and considered this social and economic upheaval as something outside your immediate concern? Yet, are you not, for the most part, Quebecers residents of the Province of Quebec, and I repeat and I insist — Quebecers!

Do you think for a moment that La Belle Province could be what it is today without the contribution of the English language population? In other words, do you think Quebec could be Quebec without you?

Just as many ethnic groups have grafted themselves to the two main groups that founded and settled Canada to form the fabric of our country as it now stands, so the English-language population forms part and parcel of the Quebec of 1966. But all too often, even English speaking citizens tend to consider themselves as outsiders. Too little has been said about the thousands of English speaking compatriots whose roots are buried deep in the history of Quebec or the many thousands who, more recently, have chosen to settle in this Province.

Here in the west end of the island of Montreal you represent a large segment of what has become known as the stronghold of English speaking Canadians in this Province. You are a definite force, but a force that sometimes gives the impression of not having found its way in the sociopolitical and economic context of a Quebec on the move.

It is natural that after a prolonged era of political and administrative complacency — that you should have been taken by surprise by this sudden ground swell of public action, this rather startling re-awakening of a people that is on the march.

It is normal that you should have asked questions. Some have worried; others buried their heads in the sands; still others ran for the ramparts and adopted the hostile attitude of combatants — as if a civil war was imminent.

I agree that some recent events in Quebec have been disquietening. I agree that you have had good reason to ask questions about the quiet revolution. We ourselves are asking them everyday. No one knows all the answers.

But don't you think that the time may have come to try to compile and analyse many of the answers you have received to the questions you have been asking since 1960?

Don't you think that we have reached the stage when full and active cooperation can be expected from all Quebecers, regardless of language, — not a cooperation based on the terms of an impatient minority but an honest collaboration with a majority that has proven without question that it has respected and intends to continue to respect the rights of a fine and proud minority.

What I am trying to express to you now is the uncomfortable feeling of many of us in Quebec that too many of our English speaking fellow citizens are still outside the fold and not participating fully in the renaissance of La Belle Province.

Oh, I know that the accent of late seems to be on Quebeco We have been accused of thinking too much in terms of this province and not enough in terms of Canada as a whole Again, I can understand this attitude.

But what I cannot understand is that so many Canadians (and unfortunately, many English-speaking residents of Quebec as well) seem to think that every constructive social and economic breakthrough on our part is a step closer to secession To even think this way is to give ample proof that one does not fully understand what is going on in Quebec today.

How natural, how normal it is for Quebecers to think more in terms of their Province than of Canada, or NATO or the United Nations! But because we are so engrossed in what is happening in our Province today does not mean we are lesser Canadians or that we have turned our back on our fellow countrymen.

French Canadians are busy re-building their own house, For more years than I can remember, Canadians have said -and some have taken pleasure in repeating — that Quebec was 50 years behind the times, And it was partly true.

Then it happened. The spirit of our people — too long subdued — suddenly awakened, took fire and (if I may use mixed metaphors, mixed but expressive) like a cleansing inferno, literally engulfed the Province.

I am proud to say that my government can take credit for a large share of the socio-economic renaissance that has marked this Province since 1960., But I am quick to add that the upsurge we are witnessing today originated in the people of Quebec who, since 1960 have felt pushing up from its institutions, its men, its women, its very soil, a wave of enthusiasm coupled with a determination to break the shackles of the past and sweep away the cobwebs of previous administrations

Quebec on the move is a people on the move, a people that refuse to sit back as idle spectators but want to be part of these exciting and fruitful years.

In six years, Quebec has accomplished what others have claimed it would take 50 years to do.

In six years, we have plunged into new and daring social and economic adventures that have won us the respect, attention and, for a great part, the admiration of every other province in the country.

In less than six years we have opened the doors of emancipation to all groups of our society who now have a voice in the shaping of their destiny, a voice that sometimes growls but more often than not continues to shout its encouragement.

In six years, Quebec has seen the coming of age of a new society., I give you, in a quick and incomplete breakdown: the creation of a General Investment Corporation designed to assist

and develop our own industries — the Quebec Pension Plan — the charter of the Quebec mining

Exploration Company — the Quebec Deposit and Investment Fund — the act respecting the legal capacity of women — the reorganization of the Provincial Police — the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education — the nationalization of our Hydro-electric companies — the Labour Code — the Hospital Insurance Act (and the soon to be established Medical Insurance Act) — the Quebec Economic Advisory Council — the General Investment corporation the highway victims indemnity Act — the establishment of the Department of Education, the Departments of Federalprovincial affaires, of Revenue, Natural Resources, Cultural Affairs, Justice, Family and Social Welfare, Tourism, Game and Fisheries a daring highway policy , an overall;social assistance place and I am only giving a few samples of the most important legislation passed by your Legislature during the past 6 years.

And some people wonder why, for the time being, Quebecers tend to think more in terms of Quebec, seem to be more involved with Quebec problems than with those of Canada as a whole?

The people of Quebec have always been and they remain loyal Canadians0 This is an irrefutable fact.

The people of Quebec, at the present time, are more Quebecoriented than ever before.. This also is an irrefutable fact0.

But that this sense of dedication to a cause that is their own — that this intensive participation in the affairs of their Province should be interpreted as evidence that French Canadians are turning their back on Canada and brandishing the flag of a narrow-minded nationalism is a flagrant misrepresentation of the facts.

And this, unfortunately, is one of the great problems we have to contend with; the misrepresentation, the misinterpretation and the misunderstanding of what is going on in Quebec today.

As a French Canadian and as Head of the Government of Quebec, I toured Western Canada with the firm intention of acquainting my fellow Canadians with the problems we are facing in this Province and to try to explain the nature of the solutions we have adopted. While, undeniably, many responsible people have understood my message, I came back saddened by the realization that there are still a number of Canadians who are not aware of the problems we are facing and, sadder still, have not been able to grasp the significance of the action of a people attempting to gain control of its destiny.

My message to you is a reminder and a challenge; Blood is thicker than water0 Much of the responsibility for the task of interpreting Quebec to the rest of Canada falls on the shoulders of the leaders of the English-speaking community in this Province.

I dare say that you can no longer remain silent0 To do so is to short-change your fellow-Canadians, those who have the right to know and those who wish to be understood.

I have fully realized it during my western tour last fall,, I have been astounded at the lack of comprehension what is going on in the Province.

For Quebec does not need to be defended beyond its borders: it wants to be understood., And who but the Englishspeaking Quebecers who are masters of their own destiny within the French community can best play that role ?

Of course, you have a wide choice. You can be passive or active. You can be negative or positive. You can undermine your Province or you can give it your enthusiastic support

Some have chosen to be passive They do not want to be involved in a business which they do not consider to be their own.. They consider themselves foreigners in their own Province. They wait. They worry. They do not talk or act Others are negative. They are the fault-finders.

They have closed their eyes to the amazing development of this Province — their Province — they refuse to see the miracle of rejuvenation that is stirring through the oncesleeping giant that is Quebec — their Quebec. The growling cernent-mixers in Manicouagan, the pounding pile-drivers probing the earth for new bridges, new buildings, new roadways, in all parts of the province, including this constituency, unfortunately all this is just noise to their ears. They will not see they will not hear. To them, « the French are taking over the Province » and the tragedy is complete.

Finally, we find those — very small in number, fortunately — who are actively engaged in deriding and destroying any thing that is « made in Quebec »a Disturbed by the winds of change, they refuse to look at and accept the facts of life. In revenge, like ardent misled firebrands among my own French-Canadian compatriots, they sow the seeds of discontent, of distrust and hatred. They are fighting a rearguard battle, hoping against hope that the quiet revolution, the emancipation of Quebec is nothing but a bad dream. And they plot, they revile or they write books —anonymously The tragedy of the situation is that the vast majority of English-speaking citizens of Quebec are not passive or negative or fighting against the Quebec revolution, I am convinced that the vast majority of the citizens of this Province who are not of French language understand what is going on. A great number are beginning to realize that the Quebec revolution, is their revolution and it is with pride and respect that they are contributing to our new way of life.

Even more, there are leaders in the English-speaking community who have crossed our frontiers into Ontario, the Maritimes and the Western provinces to relay this message.. They have shown courage and intellectual honesty. They could well have added to the fuel of vengeance, to the venom that some are prone to pour on Quebec: they refused. They spoke, not as interpreters of Quebec they spoke as Quebecers.

Madam, gentlemen, as businesspeople, you are called upon to travel the width and breadth of our country. You also, can relay the message that Canadians are awaiting to hear. All I ask of you is the same intellectual honesty that has characterized the approach of some of your fellowcountrymen who made themselves understood, not because they preached, but merely by because they expressed their pride in their Province, their pride in its many sound accomplishments, their pride in the fact that they too were part of the quiet revolution.