

On the other hand, our efforts will have to be geared above all to re-arranging our present constitution.

Our constitution was written 110 years ago, and our society and country have since evolved. Perhaps our constitution was not able to adapt to those changes considering the desire by all governments—federal as well as provincial—to ensure in the way they thought best the better-being of taxpayers. It is normal that provinces should fight to keep or patriate powers they consider theirs and that somehow they should want a certain autonomy. As a matter of fact, has not Canada already felt this desire for autonomy from England and now from the United States? I suggest it is perfectly normal on the part of the provinces to claim more powers and to insist on a constant reassessment of the sharing of responsibilities, to reflect the progress of our community as a whole.

On the other hand, I suggest it is also perfectly normal on the part of the central government to keep the powers which are in the national interest and which concern Canada as a whole. All of this should be made part of our new constitution, but its main feature should include the possibility and the capability of adapting to the changes our society will certainly go through in the future.

Mr. Speaker, the coming into power of the Parti Québécois in the province of Quebec gives us a unique opportunity. It challenges us to a debate on the future of our country; this debate which is essential, in my humble opinion, would have come about differently, had it not been for the November 15th elections. We must approach this debate in a logical and rational way. In the Province of Quebec, we can see presently an unfortunate example of the mistakes caused by passionate behaviour. Therefore it is necessary to approach the coming discussions with complete objectivity and with one single purpose in mind—the well-being of all the Canadian people.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, it is also essential that we settle once and for all this matter of Canadian identity. The time and energy we spend discussing our future would be put to much better use if directed to the economic and social progress of our people. That is why I fully endorse the remarks made by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) before the Chamber of Commerce of Quebec seven or eight months ago, when he said that time for choice and decision had come. We cannot afford the luxury of another decade of hesitation.

In order to find a solution to our constitutional problem, the government has already taken positive steps, such as the appointment of a Minister of State to deal particularly with federal-provincial relations, the creation of a special commission to issue specific recommendations, as well as the setting up of a task force to study the evolution of the situation. The Speech from the Throne also mentions concrete measures which, in addition to those already taken by the government will form the basis of the Federal Government's endeavour to reorganize the political and constitutional scene in Canada today.

Mr. Speaker, I am one of those Canadians under 30, who represent one third of the Canadian voters. My own future and the future of people of my age will be considerably influenced

*The Address—Mr. Dawson*

by the decisions that will soon be taken about the years lying ahead and the development of natural resources in Canada. Consequently, I would like to emphasize the importance of youth in relation to the discussions that will soon take place within and without this House.

If our long term goal is to maintain national unity and progress in this country, we must now make enormous efforts where our youth is concerned. All through my last election campaign I could notice even among my younger supporters, a sense of growing dissatisfaction with our present federalism and in the current state of affairs indeed, such dissatisfaction is justified in my view. It would stem from a lack of understanding of what Canada is all about, and even more from the unawareness of what Canada can offer them. As Canadian members of parliament and as a government, we therefore must keep a closer contact with our Canadian youth, because even if we could be sure of beating the current Quebec government during the referendum campaign, a majority of our young people would still be inclined to adhere to the independence venture. So we must convince them that their greatest opportunities for the future lie in a united and renewed Canada rather than in the separatist doctrine. We should stop trying to destroy the ideal of independence in this idealistic youth, and give them instead a still more challenging one, namely Canada.

In this overture to our youth, we must all do our share and let our young people play a positive role in the building of our country's future. We should be inviting their participation rather than fearing it. Since we represent nearly a third of Canadian constituents, it would be normal to find young men and women below 30 at the highest echelons in the institutions that now make up the country we will be living in tomorrow. In this regard, I would add that the presence of at least one Canadian below 30, or maybe 35, would have been in order on the Pepin-Robarts Commission.

Mr. Speaker, I am not suggesting that our youth should be put in complete control, since they are aware of their own limitations as much as I am myself, but that we combine the energy of the young with the wisdom of those more advanced in life. It must nevertheless be kept in mind that our senior citizens, pensioners and veterans deserve respect, for they have greatly contributed to the building of our country so that we may live as we do today. Nor is it a question of sacrificing the past to the present or the future, but rather of giving our young people the opportunity to take a more active part in the building of the future Canada.

I believe that knowing that our young people want to make a greater contribution and relying on the message of hope and renewal contained in the Speech from the Throne that we just heard, we may say after Voltaire: Youth is blessed for it will see great things.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Malpègue (Mr. Wood), that an humble address be presented to Her Majesty the Queen in the following terms:

To Her Most Excellent Majesty the Queen, our Most Gracious Sovereign: