

time. This land is still very young. A hundred years is not a long time in which to build a country and, in reality, the building in a big, diverse, rambling, changing land like this can never come to an end. It is always a dynamic process, and the achievement at any given point will always be a fragile thing to be cherished and nurtured.

In this Parliament, honourable senators, as members of this chamber and as people who are here to represent the regional mosaic of this vast complicated country, I hope that our constant objective will be to ensure that the actions of the central institutions of our parliamentary democracy are always directed towards the ever-present nation-building of Canada, towards the renewal of our national spirit and our national will to share a common destiny; towards the kind of country where all Canadians, east, west, centre and north can feel at home and truly fulfilled.

Seventy-five years ago, Sir Wilfrid Laurier uttered his famous phrase about the twentieth century belonging to Canada. In many respects, history has already proven him to be correct. There may be some clouds on our horizon now in terms of Canadian unity, but in the two decades remaining, let us do our part to remove them so that Laurier's vision of twentieth century Canada can be completed—strong, vibrant, tolerant, fair and united irrevocably.

The Speech from the Throne is only the framework to be fleshed out as Honourable Senator Roblin was well aware when he spoke—and I know that he has written many Speeches from the Throne himself—but let us build that framework into a parliamentary record this session which will be a real contribution to nation-building.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Lowell Murray: Would the Leader of the Government now permit a question concerning the government's commitment to the Prince Rupert terminal?

Senator Perrault: Yes.

Senator Murray: Would the minister confirm, as Senator Roblin has requested, that the \$43 million commitment made by the previous government is now back in place? In other words, is the government withdrawing the announcement by the Minister of Transport on March 27 to the effect that the new government is not committed to the \$43 million scheme of the previous government; that there will be no grant from the present government for that purpose; and that the present government would prefer a scheme to allow the government to recover development costs—in other words, a return to the Otto Lang user-pay policy? Is that announcement made by the Minister of Transport a couple of weeks ago now, to borrow a word from the Nixon White House, inoperative?

Senator Perrault: The situation with respect to Prince Rupert is this: The federal government has assumed the leadership and the prime responsibility of bringing together the funds necessary to establish the infrastructure. It is estimated that those funds will total something like \$43 million. Part of the funds will be contributed by the western provinces; part of them may be contributed on a user-pay basis

for a certain section of the wharf required for the movement of certain materials and certain grains; but the federal government in the ultimate, through, as things stand now, the National Harbours Board, will be making a substantial grant toward that project.

Negotiations are, as I said, proceeding today, but the present plan involves a significant portion of that coming in the form of a grant. May I suggest to the honourable senator that the essence of this proposal varies not one whit from the agreement that was originated by a previous Liberal government and supported by the former Conservative government. At no time did the Conservative government ever propose an outright \$43 million grant for the purpose of establishing this critical grain facility in northern British Columbia.

I ask the question again: Why was it not possible for Conservative critics to contact the Ministry of Transport or the National Harbours Board and get the facts before irresponsible charges were spread all over western Canada, which served to upset a great many people in the west?

Senator Flynn: Why did the minister not deny the statement?

Hon. Duff Roblin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Before the motion is put, my honourable friend invited me to acknowledge my fault, and I hope I may have the privilege of the Senate to respond to his invitation. I regret to tell him that I am unable to do so, not because I am without fault, since I am sure I make mistakes—and it may very well be that in the course of a long speech I do make mistakes—but in this particular instance we have asked him whether he will confirm that the \$42½ million is available, and he has given us an answer that does not confirm any such thing. He has given a long and involved answer in which he says that the federal government will do something—and that is good; the more they do, the merrier. However, I do not think that under the circumstances, and in view of the statement made by the Minister of Transport which has just been quoted, we on this side need have any feelings of being inaccurate in giving that information which, to the best of our knowledge and ability, was correct.

When my honourable friend is able to rise in this chamber and tell me that the \$42½ million has been reinstated, then perhaps I would agree with him that the matter can be put to rest.

As for it being presented to the chamber in an effort to stir up ill will, far be it from me to do that. I think the other parts of my speech indicated that this was merely an illustration of the problems that arise. Certainly, in this respect one would expect that the federal government would announce a change in policy if there were one before now so that we all could know about it. If it has been announced, it has not been made known to me, but naturally that is another matter which I regret. I do not see that the question has been directly answered with respect to that matter.