

The Address—Mr. Diefenbaker

centennial celebrations are not becoming the monopoly of the party in power.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Diefenbaker: We see that happening everywhere. One of the most interesting examples is Expo. That is now embraced as a Liberal project. We brought it in, we fixed the site, and they finished the work because they won the election. All that we did is now forgotten as the present government apparently concludes that the centenary is a time for national partisan celebration.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Diefenbaker: In the centennial document I have it is set out that George Brown brought in Macdonald and his Tories and that this finally resulted in confederation. For those of another view I recommend the words of that peerless parliamentarian, that orator among orators, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who said:

—the place of Sir John Macdonald in this country was so large and so absorbing, that it is almost impossible to conceive that the political life of this country, the fate of this country, can continue without him—

I think it can be asserted that for the supreme art of governing men, Sir John Macdonald was gifted as few men in any land or in any age were gifted; gifted with the most high of all qualities, qualities which would have made him famous wherever exercised—

Then he goes on to say that no one can deny Sir John Macdonald a position above all others among the makers of this nation. I find it necessary to refer to these words because the Centennial Commission has begun to re-write history in 1967.

Then we come to the debates, and it is well to read those debates. I suggest that hon. members read the speeches of Macdonald, Cartier, Brown and D'Arcy McGee, made in 1865. Those men knew what confederation was. One thinks of Cartier when one hears of the doctrine of two nations in Canada. That doctrine was swept aside by Cartier 102 years ago. He said it was a preposterous notion. He went on to say this:

● (3:30 p.m.)

It is pretended it will be impossible to carry out confederation on account of differences of race and religion. Those who hold that opinion are in error. It is precisely on account of the differences in race and local interests that the federal system should be established and that it will work well.

We have often read in the newspapers that it is a great evil to have such different races, such a distinction between French Canadians and English Canadians.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

He goes on:

We shall form a political nationality—

Not a dual nationality.

—with which neither the national origin nor the religion of any individual will interfere.

Today we should reread what the fathers of confederation said. When they finally concluded their deliberations they celebrated the event. A few days ago there was a celebration in the city of New York. The press of Canada wrote it up. I should like to read a description of another event.

A few days after the close of the circus—

That is the way the meeting of the fathers of confederation was described.

—a great public ball and supper is announced; the evening of the day arrives; the proud and the gay, arrayed in fashion's gauds, flock to the scene where revelry presides . . . Pleasure, panoplied in smiles, meets and embraces joy—the fascinating dance goes merrily, and the waltz with its entwinedments, etc.

It is the story of a great revel. In those days the press wrote like that. It is not a picture of the recent ball in New York. This was the ball given at Province House in Charlottetown at the end of the conference in 1864. Read the story of confederation. Let Canadians know.

What about the centennial train? That too has been appropriated by those sitting opposite. In 1942 I suggested a train to go across Canada to display the cornerstones of our freedom. When we set up the Centennial Commission we stated that first priority should be given to arrangements for a centennial train. This has done a great deal to show Canada to Canadians. But it lacks something. It lacks the inspiration which comes from the greatness of the lives of those of the past. For some reason or another Sitting Bull was made the representative of the great Indians of Canada until the train arrived at Calgary, when Sitting Bull sat. They put an end to that. What about Tecumseh and Piapot and Mistawassis, those great Canadian chiefs? They were forgotten on this train while an American was named as a great Canadian.

The Queen had no place on this train until I raised the question and the Queen's picture went in. No Canadian entering that train will ever see the Queen's picture unless he walks backward. When we complained to the Centennial Commission the answer over the telephone was: "This is a Canadian train".

Let us catch something of the inspiration of this nation's past. Let us not forever chisel away at our traditions. There has taken place