

by one desire, namely the common good of all Canadians and of Canada as a whole.

I make this appeal again to the Prime Minister. I say that the tinkering that has gone on is arousing antagonism throughout the country. The constitution cannot be changed by whittling it away. If I am charged with overstating the question, I will refer hon. members to the speech made the other day by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) in which he said among other things that opting out and the like have weakened the Canadian constitution.

At a confederation conference I would look for representatives of every province in Canada to appear with solid, practical suggestions. I would hope that representatives would come with open minds and in a spirit of Canadian fraternity to endeavour to meet the situation. It will not, in my time, tear this nation asunder but if the constitution is to be circumvented, undermined or departed from on an ad hoc basis, Canada will not long survive.

That is the essence of what I have to say today. I make this appeal to the house. To secure the viewpoint of the members of this house I shall move an amendment. What should be put in it? I do not like omnibus amendments. I like an amendment which will strike at the heart and raise the hope of men and women across this nation. We could incorporate in the amendment that Canadian-American relations are in a very bad state and that internationally our image as a result of our stand on Viet Nam is one of pusillanimous neutrality. We could incorporate an item to the effect that nothing has been done to meet the overriding problem in so far as the economy and industrial and labour relations are concerned. It could include a demand for a reduction in unnecessary expenditures and an end to those climbing expenditures which have gone up \$3 billion since we held office.

I hear so much about youth today. Where is there anything for youth in the speech from the throne? I hope that today the Prime Minister will announce again the 10,000 scholarships which are like sugar plums hanging in the air for four years. Those who expected them and voted for them have graduated. I could deal with the cost of living which according to the latest record rose 1.3 points over the month of March, the April report being in today. I could deal with the failure to assist the farmers and agriculture with the exception of the addition of one more task

The Address—Mr. Pearson

force which will have only one effect. Nobody needs to assess the task; everybody knows it. The force, however, will postpone action. We could include the housing crisis. According to the *Financial Post* of April 29, and it is always right in financial matters, the crisis is the greatest ever. We could deal with the need for action, as the No. 1 project of parliament today, in the reduction of taxation. All of these things could be included. However, this is centennial year and in my opinion, as well as in the opinion of all hon. members I am sure, national unity comes first. These other matters, therefore, may be dealt with when the budget comes up or when motions to go into supply are advanced. In order to give Canadians an opportunity of knowing whether this parliament means to act effectively in connection with our national problem of unity, I shall not deal with these several matters and many more with which I could deal.

● (4:30 p.m.)

I therefore move, seconded by the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot (Mr. Ricard):

This house regrets that Her Majesty's advisers have failed to submit any program to give effective direction with regard to Canada's constitutional development in this centennial year and has failed to provide for the calling of a national constitutional confederation conference to be widely representative of the governments, federal and provincial and of the territories, and of all political parties for the purpose of repatriating Canada's constitution and revising and amending it as agreed upon so that Canada's future course may be charted in the interests of all the people with a declaration of national goals based on the confident assurance of success that was so selflessly and patriotically displayed by the fathers of confederation.

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): My first words, Mr. Speaker, must be to join with the right hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker) in congratulating the mover (Mr. Jamieson) and seconder (Mr. Côté, Nicolet-Yamaska). I have been in the house a good many years, not as long as the right hon. gentleman but long enough to have listened to a great many speeches moving and seconding the address. I have never heard it done better. I think the two hon. members are to be very sincerely congratulated. I am sure they will get satisfaction out of the fact they know they have done their job well and will be appreciated in the parts of the country from which they come.

I should like, if I may, to congratulate the right hon. gentleman in opening this debate