

*The Address—Mr. Douglas*

member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Barnett), is as follows:

That the motion moved by the right hon. Leader of the Opposition be amended as follows:

By striking out all the words after the words "centennial year" in the fourth line thereof, and adding the following thereto:

"And has failed to prepare and present to this parliament proposals for amendment to the constitution of Canada as a necessary preliminary for a national constitutional conference, and has failed to make the proposals necessary

(1) to set out the legislative powers of parliament necessary for the maintenance of an effective confederation;

(2) to provide an appropriate special status for the province of Quebec;

(3) to provide for a constitutional Bill of Rights;

(4) to provide for the patriation of the Canadian Constitution."

• (11:50 a.m.)

In this our centennial year there are many things of which the Canadian people can be proud. Ernest Renan once said that "a nation is a body of people who have done great things together in the past and hope to do great things together in the future." I think this is a good definition of Canada. This nation has done great things in the past. We and our forefathers have built in the northern half of the North American continent a great nation. Our forefathers cleared the forests, tilled the virgin soil, built their homes, churches, schools and hospitals, built roads, canals, a great railroad system, an inland waterway, built industries and made Canada one of the great trading nations of the world. We can be proud of what this country has done in the past.

The question facing this parliament today is: What are we going to do together in the future? We in this party believe that Canada as it enters its second century must set for itself social and economic goals and must call on the Canadian people to rally together to bring about the achievement of those goals. The New Democratic party believes that if we are to make our second century an even greater one than the first the governments of this country, particularly the federal government, must play a more effective and dynamic role in the social and economic affairs of Canada. This does not imply the imposition of restrictions, the erosion of freedom or the loss of private initiative and enterprise. On the contrary, through our democratically elected governments we Canadians can broaden our freedom, provide increased opportunities for our people and assure higher standards of living. Above all, we can impart a new dimension to our national life.

[Mr. Douglas.]

I am sure those who have visited Expo '67 must be proud of this great accomplishment.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Douglas:** It demonstrates what Canadians can do given participation by all levels of governments and all sections of the community.

The role of government has always loomed large in Canada's history. In 1867 the setting up of confederation was a political act in defiance of geography. It called for government intervention and for government direction. The national policies on tariff protection for infant industries, western land and resource development, the building of an east-west railroad, the building of a water transport system, and later the building of the greatest inland seaway in the world, all called for far reaching political decisions. The depression period compelled even reluctant governments to intervene in the economy in order to combat the waste of unemployment, to control the issue of currency and credit through a central bank, to control monopolies and to provide a more equitable distribution of income by fiscal policies and a greater measure of social security through a system of family allowances and the Canada Pension Plan. And now we are to have medicare.

In spite of those who talk about laissez faire economics, we have developed and are developing in Canada a mixed economy in which government enterprise at all three levels of government, private enterprise and co-operative enterprise are working together for the benefit of the people of this country.

As we move into our second century we must clarify what the role of the federal government is to be. The need now is for more dynamic and creative government leadership in social and economic affairs. There has been a failure on the part of this government to fulfil its well-established responsibilities. Even worse has been its dismal inertia in facing the challenges of a rapidly changing world. The performance of the Canadian economy has lagged far behind its potential capacity. Let me give the house a few indications of the extent of this failure: (1) Recurrent heavy unemployment; (2) slow rate of growth in our per capita income; (3) successive spurts of inflation and price increases; (4) periodic international imbalance of payments; (5) mushrooming foreign ownership and increasing foreign control of the Canadian economy; (6) regional disparity of income and economic growth.