

Congratulations on Canadian Centennial

Quebec Act of 1774 allowing religious freedom and preserving those rights which were guaranteed in 1760, which in large measure was the cause of the 13 colonies revolting in 1776; they took strong objection to what had been done in Canada.

These are things we do not forget. These are things of the spirit, golden threads in the tapestry of our parliamentary system. It is with deep appreciation of what the British parliament has done for our country in preserving the freedoms we hold so dear, freedom of religion, freedom of speech and free, responsible government, that I speak today. For all these things we are debtors to that parliament at Westminster. So long as it lives, freedom will live.

It is my honour to join with the Prime Minister in seconding a resolution of appreciation for a message which touches the hearts of all of us.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): My colleagues and I desire to support most enthusiastically the motion which has been moved by the Prime Minister and seconded by the Leader of the Opposition. We deeply appreciate the congratulations and good wishes which have been received from the parliament at Westminster.

As has been pointed out, the British parliament gave birth to confederation. While we very naturally think with pride of the Canadian fathers of confederation, it is true that the work they did could not possibly have come to fruition had they not had the co-operation of the statesmen in Great Britain, and had they not been helped tremendously by the foresight of British leaders like Lord Durham. Therefore we are greatly indebted to the British parliament, to the men who have sat in it over the years, for the help they gave in laying the foundations of Canada.

• (5:50 p.m.)

With the passage of time we have become more and more independent and we have insisted increasingly, generation by generation, on being masters in our own house. I do not think for a moment that this has caused any displeasure in the British parliament or among the British people. As a matter of fact, when they launched Canada on its way it was part of their hopes and their aspirations that Canada would become a great sovereign power and an equal partner with Great Britain. It must be a source of satisfaction to them now to see Canada, as an independent, sovereign nation, working closely with Great Britain in

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

the Commonwealth of Nations, in the United Nations, and in the affairs of the world.

We, Mr. Speaker, in this house, and in this country have a deep affection for Great Britain. Part of it comes from our ties of blood, but I suppose roughly two thirds of the Canadian people do not have ethnic relationships with Great Britain. However, we do have ties of common appreciation for the parliamentary system, for the British system of justice, and for the concepts of freedom and liberty which Great Britain gave to the world and which we, in our turn, have accepted and seek to perpetuate.

William Pitt once said in one of his famous speeches, when the Napoleonic wars were at their height, that Britain had saved herself by her exertions and Europe by her example. I think it can be said with equal truth today that Great Britain, in spite of innumerable difficulties, is saving herself by her exertions and the world by her example. I hope that we here in Canada as we enter into our second century will continue to march in step with Great Britain, and that we, with Britain and the other members of the commonwealth, may play an important part in promoting peace, stability and prosperity throughout the earth.

[Translation]

Mr. C. A. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, in the name of the Ralliement Créditiste, I should like to join the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) in thanking the British House of Commons for the resolution which it kindly sent our government on the occasion of our centennial. We appreciate all the kind words and good wishes contained in the message of the London government. Other countries will certainly send Canada their congratulations this year. It should nevertheless be remembered in listening to these congratulations—we are overwhelmed with congratulations—that tomorrow is another day and that all those kind words are not necessarily true.

We sincerely thank the British government for their good wishes on the occasion of the centennial of confederation. In fact, it is quite an event for Canada to have survived during these hundred years after the agreement reached in 1867, if we consider the government of the time and particularly the two great men who, in 1867, laid the basis upon which Canada developed and expanded.

Have we now reached the ideal suggested by these two great men? I have always found that no ideal can be fully attained. Never-