

*Canadian Centennial*

Throughout the period from the end of the first world war to date we have seen a continuing laissez-faire attitude on the part of Liberal administrations. There has been no leadership, no inspiration, no active role played in the development of our natural resources and the other things that are required to produce in 1967 the celebration which the hon. member seeks in this resolution. From administration to administration the government in this period thought it was carrying out its function when it doled out from time to time on a piecemeal basis some welfare benefits but it lacked the vision and the daring that was evident during the period of Sir John A. Macdonald's administration in this country. I might use these words:

I don't think that free enterprise requires the government do nothing about economic conditions. Governments can—and I believe governments should—pursue fiscal and commercial policies which will encourage and stimulate enterprise and wise government policies can do a lot to maintain the right kind of economic climate.

If my last two sentences should sound familiar to the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. St. Laurent) I can only say that they are his words spoken at the annual convention of the Canadian Lumbermen's Association in Montreal on February 9, 1953. It is unfortunate that the last administration did not take these words to heart and do something about them. It is increasingly apparent that with vast new worlds being opened before us by science leadership is required in government and I can only say that it is just as well for this country that the results of the election on June 10 turned out as they did.

The tremendous head start which this country had because of its resources of oil, gas and coal and those materials upon which a highly industrialized nation bases its whole economy may no longer be the determining factor in maintaining our relative position among the nations of the world. As the Red Queen said to Alice, "It takes all the running you can do to keep in the same place and if you want to get somewhere else you must run at least twice as fast."

Can we honestly say that the solution to our problems is the establishment of a 100th anniversary committee which has been proposed by the hon. member? It seems to me that if we are prepared to agree to this type of resolution then in fact we are abdicating our position as the government of this country. The references it contains to housing, slum clearance, conservation, irrigation and highway construction are matters which the government of Canada must take upon itself to deal with in the proper manner either through legislative process or in conjunction with other levels of government.

[Mr. Hamilton (York West).]

I must confess that when I see the word "planning" contained in a resolution sponsored by a C.C.F. member I can only assume that socialist planning is intended and until such time as I have a clearer picture of the aims of that party I find it impossible to accept its type of economic and social planning for Canada.

As I have said before, I feel that the government faces a very crucial and complex task in the next ten years of Canada's history. It is going to require a high degree of responsibility, constant co-operation with all levels of government and co-operation on the part of the government with the people of the country in order to ensure that when 1967 is reached we can truly celebrate our 100th anniversary.

I am sure that the Prime Minister (Mr. Diefenbaker) of this country is fully aware of those responsibilities. As I said in the debate in reply to the speech from the throne he intends to maintain a constant liaison with the people. He will see that the urgent social requirements of the people are realized. There is every indication that all of the items listed in the resolution will be dealt with in their turn as we meet them in the house. I notice that one of the first things mentioned is housing. I do not think we need to worry too much about what can be done by this administration in connection with housing. Only last week we heard the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Green) outline the program of the government to ensure that a greater number of people in the lower income group will have housing priced within their reach.

As a matter of fact, sir, there is evidence already of what has been accomplished. I hold in my hand the *Globe and Mail* of just this morning, indicating that house-building shows a 63 per cent gain in November. The article reads in part:

House-building, after lagging severely in Canada last winter, has picked up smartly and in November was a thumping 63 per cent greater than in the same month of 1956.

This increase was the second straight monthly gain, figures of MacLean Building Reports show. The result was that for October and November combined, house-building awards were up 44 per cent over the same 1956 period.

Big reason for the improvement, notes the statistical agency, was the additional \$150 million of mortgage money made available for lower-cost housing under the National Housing Act.

It seems to me, sir, we have adequate proof that we have no need to abdicate our position in connection with housing to a special committee. We can go on with other items. The resolution refers to public works programs. Why, sir, I have a list here of 31 projects which are under way in Canada right