

*Canadian Centennial*

to stimulate our artists, those whom I have called our ambassadors a moment ago, and to help our people realize that the best way of celebrating the Canadian confederation is to prefer one's intellectual development to one's material well-being.

(Text):

**Mr. Robert Simpson (Churchill):** Mr. Speaker, in discussing the aspects of the resolution which is presently before the house I should like to point out first of all that if this resolution had suggested that a committee be set up, possibly on a federal-provincial basis, specifically to plan the 100th anniversary celebrations then I would say it would certainly be worthy of support. However, it seems to me that although it appears to have the welfare of the nation at heart it is taking away most of the obligations of the hon. members of this house. I feel that we are asking the people of Canada to pay with a good deal of duplication, for something for which, I believe, they are already paying; something which they are entitled to get and for which they are at present receiving value.

Now in dealing with the following subjects I might point out that most of these problems and subjects under discussion in this resolution have already been studied and are continuously being studied by many competent committees and groups. I also think the resolution which is before us might well be construed as a measure of no confidence in most of the groups already so established. By that I mean that we have many groups in operation, independent of government, in the way of agricultural and labour organizations, chambers of commerce and many others.

Hon. members of this house from various parties of the opposition have stated that they are in full support of this resolution as it stands; they are quite willing to set up committees despite the fact, as I have already pointed out, in my opinion such committees are now in operation and they are competent committees.

I think that in the short space of time—in fact a period of less than six months—in which this government has been in office and the period of less than two months in which this house has been in session the present government has shown ample evidence and has proved conclusively that they are, not only eager and able to deal with these recognized groups who are doing such a good job in their various localities but are also capable of sitting down and discussing with those groups their problems and bringing such problems to a successful conclusion.

[Mr. Gauthier (Portneuf).]

In regard to agriculture, for instance, we have many capable groups working on this important question. I say important because up until now and I imagine for all time to come agriculture has been and will be, rightly so, the backbone of our nation. But what has happened to agriculture during the past few years? Agriculture has been allowed to go down to a point where the farm family is fast becoming a rarity. Families are leaving the farm areas because of today's high cost of production; due entirely to the high cost of equipment as compared to the inequitable returns to the farmer for his products; the slow process of selling his grain, plus of course the tight money situation faced until a short time ago. The farmer is unable to keep his head above water.

Now these remarks apply generally to agricultural people all across Canada but are particularly applicable to the young farmer—the type of a farmer who, until now, I have not heard mentioned in this house—and the young farmer certainly has a multitude of problems. In many many cases he returned from overseas at the conclusion of the last world conflict and had very little opportunity to get himself re-established in time to avail himself of any of the benefits from the short period of boom which agriculture may have enjoyed during the latter 1940's. Consequently he found himself sadly trapped in the terrible cost-price squeeze which has since developed.

This was one time when the old maxim of there being safety in numbers certainly did not apply, because there was small consolation to such a young farmer in the fact that he had lots of company. He had his land and he had some equipment, both partially paid for, and he could produce crops because most of them were good farmers and willing to work. He could not however pay his debts with farm-stored grain. Later on, measures were introduced whereby he was allowed to borrow money on his farm-stored grain at 5 per cent interest, so he found himself paying that 5 per cent interest and at the same time earning about 2 per cent interest or less on his capital investment.

So what did the young farmer do? In many cases he found himself in the position where, if he was fortunate enough to find employment elsewhere, he went into industry and was better off financially by investing only his physical and mental capacity in that industry as against a fairly large monetary investment in agriculture. He had more cash by working with his two hands than he could possibly get with all his land and equipment, but he did not want to be in