

Speech From the Throne

If Canadians are to live together as a peaceful society and contribute as citizens of the world, they must begin by understanding who they are as a people.

Our country has endured difficult times of late. But while passion may have been strained, it must not be allowed to break our bonds of affection. Let us hope and pray now that we will listen to the better angels of our nature.

I would like to close with the following quotation:

I believe in Canada. I have faith in its future, and I am dedicated to its destiny. I believe that this country has potential for greatness, not only in material terms, but in the things of the mind and the spirit.

The Canadian who spoke those words was Tommy Douglas.

[*Translation*]

Today, when the greatest need of free men and free nations is to come together—and act on the compulsions and opportunities of interdependence; at this time of all times it would be a tragic thing for Canadians to have to admit their failure to unify their own country—unity without sacrificing special and separate values. No Canadian, surely, could contemplate with anything but bitter regret the weakening, let alone the failure, of Confederation, especially when Canada has grown so much in stature and won so much respect in the world.

The Canadian who spoke those words was Mike Pearson.

[*English*]

Finally, Mr. Speaker:

Federation was a prerequisite to the national development of Canada and the maintenance of national unity remains the key to its destiny. I know there are some who feel a sense of embarrassment in expressing pride to their nation, perhaps because of the fear that they might be considered old-fashioned or parochial—a healthy life and devotion to one's country constitutes a most fruitful inspiration in life.

The Canadian who spoke those words was John Diefenbaker.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pronovost: I think you will agree, Mr. Speaker and fellow members, that we would do well to ponder these words, and that they guide us in the weeks and months ahead.

The hour is great with change—so let us begin. I am proud to reaffirm my support to this government and I am proud to present today the Address in Reply to the speech from the Throne.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Pronovost: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honorable member for Regina—Wascana, that the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor General of Canada:

To His Excellency the Right Honourable Ramon Hnatyshyn, a Member of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Chancellor and Principal Companion of the Order of Canada, Chancellor and Commander of the Order of Military Merit, upon whom has been conferred the Canadian Forces' Decoration, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:

We, Her Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the House of Commons of Canada, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to your Excellency for the gracious Speech which Your Excellency has addressed to both Houses of Parliament.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

[*English*]

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity.

I must say that when I was asked to second the Speech from the Throne, the full impact of this honour did not immediately occur to me. However, this changed rather dramatically when I read the following passage in a book written by John Henderson entitled *Great Men of Canada* and printed in 1929. In the book, Mr. Henderson makes reference to Sir Wilfrid Laurier in the following fashion. He says: "In seeking federal office, he was elected by a majority 238 and took his seat in the first Liberal Parliament returned after Confederation. Immediately Laurier became a success. He seconded the Speech from the Throne."

• (1730)

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Schneider: Mr. Speaker, it was at this time that I was struck with the honour of this opportunity. I only hope that I can be nearly so eloquent as I imagine Sir Wilfrid Laurier was, and become half as successful as he went on to be, of course.