

*Canadian Centennial*

up is from the Toronto *Daily Star* of Thursday, March 21, 1957. The heading is, "Courage to take chance advocated by St. Laurent". The story is written by Mr. Bruce Macdonald, a staff correspondent, and it reads in part:

Borrowing a line from Browning, Prime Minister St. Laurent last month invited those present to the celebration of his 75th birthday to "grow old along with me. The best is yet to be."

In a speech in Hamilton earlier this week, the prime minister reaffirmed his conviction that for Canada the best years are ahead, but he did it in forceful, vigorous and imaginative terms which belie his age.

His speech amounted to a challenge—a challenge to Canadians to seize the future which can be theirs with work, planning and the courage to take a chance.

"But for the balance of Canada's first century as a nation—and throughout the shining story of her second century—this, more than any other in the world, will be the land of opportunity," the prime minister declared.

But the future "won't just drop like a ripe plum into our hands," he warned. "We have to go after it with renewed energy, with new ideas, and with the confidence that what we are blue-printing can in fact be built."

It is perhaps half a century since a Canadian prime minister sounded such a challenge. Then it was his famous predecessor, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who declared in the House of Commons: "To those who urge upon us the policy of tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow, to those who tell us wait, wait, wait; to those who advise us to pause, to consider, to reflect, to calculate and to inquire, our answer is: No, this is not time for deliberation, this is a time for action. The floodtide is upon us that leads on to fortune; if we let it pass, the voyage of our national life, bright as it is today, will be bound in shallows—"

And so the report of the speech of the present Leader of the Opposition goes on, ending up with this paragraph:

Mr. St. Laurent gave no hint of the kind of projects he had in mind, but disclosed that he intended on another occasion to "suggest for my fellow citizens some way of setting up challenging and adventurous goals" for Canada's centenary.

Well that makes three or four of us now; Mr. I. Norman Smith, Mr. Leger and the present Leader of the Opposition. But I call another witness, the present Prime Minister, who is very proud of what is referred to as his party's national development policy. In this document which the Conservatives put out in the last election campaign, and which I confess we quote sometimes in a different vein, there is this opening paragraph:

Can anyone doubt that Canada stands at the crossroads in her history? This is a time for greatness in planning for her future. Unity requires it—freedom demands it—vision now will ensure it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the present Prime Minister is a good witness. His words make it unanimous; we all agree that Canada has a great future. As put by Sir Winston Churchill when he was in Ottawa in 1952:

Upon the whole surface of the globe there is no more spacious and splendid domain open to the activities and genius of free men.

[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

Those were the words Sir Winston Churchill used to describe the Canada he was visiting at that time. We are agreed; we are unanimous as to the possibilities of the future so far as this country is concerned, but we are also agreed, in the words of the present Prime Minister, that it takes vision now to ensure the greatness of that future. This is the reason, Mr. Speaker, why I join with Mr. Norman Smith, with the Leader of the Opposition and others in urging upon the government that these matters be not left until eight, nine or nine and a half years from now, but that without delay steps be taken to set up a committee to plan the various matters which are suggested in my motion. There were a few smiles when that motion was read, as though it seemed to cover everything. It covers a lot, but there are still other matters. The point is that we should start now to plan for progress on a broad scale.

Let me just mention a few of the items set out in my resolution. I shall do so quickly and in passing. It will be fine to have fireworks and speeches on July 1, 1967; how much finer it will be if we have the Canadian people well housed. We can do it. It would be better, instead of just talking of the South Saskatchewan dam and other conservation and irrigation projects, if we really have them. We can have these projects and more, if we start planning for them now. We can do the same thing in the fields of transportation, highways, railway crossings, municipal projects, the building of hospitals, and so on. The field is tremendous; the opportunity is there to build the kind of Canada so that on July 1, 1967, we will really have something to celebrate.

Let us hope that we are not celebrating our 100th birthday with unemployment around us; let us hope by that time we will have introduced sufficient social and economic planning to get rid of unemployment completely; let us hope we will have got rid of exploitation of man by man within our country, and that we will have achieved the kind of life in which we are all participants in a co-operative and common endeavour. Let us strengthen our economy by 1967, so that every section of this nation will abound in material and social progress; so that social security will be guaranteed to all our people, and so that we will be able to play our part in helping the rest of the world to rise out of conditions of hunger, squalor and misery and thus remove the causes of war and achieve peace for all mankind.

The opportunities are tremendous. The challenge is put to us by Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir Wilfrid Laurier, by my late