

who is a friend of all those who have the privilege of knowing him and a loyal servant of Canada.

On behalf of all of us, Mr. Speaker, I congratulate you most sincerely on the perfect way in which you accomplish your functions, your willingness in serving the Senate well, and your unfailing understanding.

We were very happy, honourable senators, to see the honourable Leader of the Government in the Senate fully assume once again his functions and his responsibilities, after an unfortunate illness. We sincerely hope that he will stay in good health.

We are delighted at the choice of the honourable Senator Jean-Paul Deschatelets as acting leader, and we express to him our best wishes for a brilliant career. He can count right away on the co-operation of all senators.

I am happy to note on behalf of everyone that the courtesy and understanding of the honourable Leader of the Opposition in the Senate and of his assistant have won them our respect and our high regard.

May I repeat how personally grateful I am for the kind welcome and friendship of all the honourable senators since my arrival among you a few months ago.

I have highly appreciated the invitation extended to me by the Leader of the Government to move the motion on the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne in this hundredth year of our Confederation.

This honour reflects on my native city of Sherbrooke and on the Eastern Townships which I have the privilege to represent in the electoral division of Wellington. This is an excellent opportunity, I believe, to voice some constructive views and comments on Canada, especially with regard to our centennial.

[English]

Our centennial session, the second of the 27th Parliament, had a strong send-off yesterday. The Speech from the Throne, shortly after the closing of the first session, the longest in Canadian history, gave, I believe, much promise and much hope to our Canadians. I am sure we particularly noted this general remark in the speech:

...we who find ourselves in positions of authority must always remember that it is our responsibility and our opportunity to serve the needs and aspirations of the Canadian people.

We, as always, will remember this responsibility and opportunity to serve.

The Speech from the Throne has made an important reference to the centennial year. Indeed, the 100th year of Confederation has for us Canadians a number of basic and important meanings. It means that we have reached our full maturity. We have become a recognized major nation, esteemed and respected everywhere and by all. We have passed the 20 million mark in population. We have attained economic and political recognition among the most important nations of this world. We have become able as a nation to tackle some of the greatest projects in this day and age.

Yet, small in population and spread quite thinly over an immense territory 3,000 miles long, we have nevertheless found a way to grow well and healthy together, and this in every sense of the word. We have been capable of establishing, not only over our country, great and efficient communications, in the air, on land, and on the sea, but we have extended these far beyond the horizon to distant countries all over the globe. We have acted as a purveyor of grains and minerals for people in want. We have marketed our manufactured products in almost every country. We have provided, generously, foreign aid to many of the poorer nations for their individual welfare, advancement and development, without incurring their reproach or adverse criticism.

We have managed to advance among us our culture, our arts, our education, our science and we have contributed to our physical betterment and our health. We have been adopting each of us another culture and more and more at least one other language besides our own. We have learned to respect one another's customs, religion, philosophy and language of origin.

If we have not always shared the same policies and the same ideas, we nevertheless have respected here the wish of the majority and learned to do justice to the rights of the individuals.

We have lived, I feel, here and everywhere in Canada quite happily together and we have never hesitated to welcome one and all from all parts of our world to join us and become permanent Canadians, sharing at our table our good fortunes. We have, in spite of a few spotlighted incidents, shown each other the true brotherhood so necessary to advance and progress together. For the first hundred years we have done all this.