

Prime Minister Jean Chrétien has declared himself happily and enthusiastically to be the steward and protector of our Liberalism. He has committed himself, his ministers, his senators, and his members in the other place to this program, as outlined in the Throne Speech yesterday, and I shall repeat that sentence already quoted from the Throne Speech: "My Ministers will insist upon integrity, honesty and openness on the part of those who exercise power."

Prime Minister Joseph Jacques Jean Chrétien, a native son of Quebec, a boy, a man, a person from Shawinigan, who, molded by the Liberalism of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson, is also deeply attached to the Liberalism of the great chieftain, the Right Honourable Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

I observed, during the election campaign, that Mr. Chrétien repeatedly quoted three famous lines from Sir Wilfrid Laurier's well-known speech of 1877 in Quebec City. Those oft-quoted lines are: "I am a Liberal. I am one of those who think that everywhere, in human things, there are abuses to be reformed, new horizons to be opened up, and new forces to be developed."

Honourable senators, I have frequently noticed that while many people quote those three lines, no one ever seems to know what comes before or what comes after. I thought for the purpose of today's record, in the hope that many diligent young people and students will be reading this record some day, I should put that on the record.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier said:

Certainly, I am far from blaming my adversaries for their convictions, but for my part, as I have already said, I am a Liberal. I am one of those who think that everywhere, in human things, there are abuses to be reformed, new horizons to be opened up, and new forces to be developed. Moreover, Liberalism seems to me in all respects superior to the other principle. The principle of Liberalism is inherent to the very essence of our nature, to that desire of happiness with which we are all born into the world, which pursues us throughout life and which is never completely gratified on this side of the grave. Our souls are immortal, but our means are limited. We constantly gravitate towards an ideal which we never attain. We dream of good, but we never realize the best. We only reach the goal we have proposed to ourselves, to discover new horizons opening up, which we had not before even suspected... This condition of our nature is precisely what makes the greatness of man, for it condemns him irrevocably to movement, to progress: our means are limited, but our nature is perfectible and we have the infinite for our arena.

Canada is a vast country and known to be difficult to govern. In 1867, when the Fathers of Confederation chose to call Canada a Dominion, and when Sir John A. Macdonald and others chose to adopt the phrase "from sea to sea," they borrowed from one of the only two psalms attributed to Solomon, Psalm 72, verse 8: "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."

Just as the psalmody was the bread of comfort for the early Christian monks in the wilderness of the desert, for us, as Liberals, this body of ideas and beliefs was our bread in the wilderness of the past nine years. During this country's adversity and insecurity of the last nine years we were sustained by the strength of our souls and by the strength of the convictions I have spelled out today. We were also sustained by the strength of the conviction that we would be on this side again, too.

Prime Minister Chrétien was called to serve as leader of the Liberal Party during those years in the wilderness. He has ably demonstrated his fortitude and his devotion in the face of enormous personal tribulation and daunting political adversity. As Prime Minister, he has manifested his conviction in the time-tested, long-enduring concept of the leader as servant. "He serves most who leads." He must serve the most who is the leader. He is one of a long line of international Liberals, including William Wilberforce, William Ewart Gladstone, Herbert Henry Asquith, David Lloyd George, and one of a long line of Canadian Liberals such as George Brown, Edward Blake, Sir Alexander MacKenzie, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, William Lyon Mackenzie King, Louis St. Laurent, Lester B. Pearson, Pierre Elliott Trudeau and John Napier Turner. We Senate Liberals are all joined and connected to them.

Prime Minister Chrétien and his ministry, now in the flush of triumph, with revived courage and renewed confidence, meet Parliament in the name of Her Majesty and the people of Canada; and they have placed the government plan before us. As we support the government plan of action and program of legislation and administration, and as we endeavour to bring this program into action and into law, I do believe that, with Prime Minister Chrétien, as Liberal senators "our swords shall not sleep in our hands."

Honourable senators, this is our pedigree, this is our history. We shall be known by our difference as we endeavour to return dignity to public service, humanity to government, stability and security to the economy, and confidence to the hearts and minds of people. Honourable senators, we place our program before this chamber and ask all honourable senators to support it.

On motion of Senator Lynch-Staunton, debate adjourned.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION

MOTION FOR APPOINTMENT—DEBATE CONTINUED

On the Order:

Resuming the debate on the motion of the Honourable Senator Molgat, seconded by the Honourable Senator Hébert:

That, pursuant to rule 86(1), the Honourable Senators Corbin, Doyle, Hébert, Kinsella, Lewis, MacDonald (*Halifax*), Neiman, Petten and Phillips be appointed a Committee of Selection to nominate (a) a senator to preside as Speaker *pro tempore*; and (b) the senators to serve on the several select committees during the present session; and to report with all convenient speed the names of the senators so nominated.