

McDermid reflects

Canada Day a chance to rekindle spirit of '67

By STAN DIDZBALIS
Herald special

John McDermid remembers 1967 - Canada's Centennial Year - very well. He recalls participating in Expo '67 and witnessing an Armed Forces display in Ottawa "with a lump in my throat". He says Canadian spirits were at an all-time high.

"I'm afraid we've lost that spirit," Mr. McDermid, newly-elected Progressive Conservative MP for Brampton-Geor-

town says now. "We try to revive it once a year on Canada Day, but we can't. It's such a fleeting moment. It's there for the July 1 weekend and it's gone."

The likely reason is that Canadians are very "unemotional" people, he says. "We do not cheer for this country until forced to."

"Let one American knock Canada and the pride comes out in Canadians," says Mr. McDermid.

This unemotionalism does

not necessarily need correcting, he says, because "it (emotion) can be overdone and the true significance lost."

Mr. McDermid says he has gained a great appreciation of Canada through extensive travel.

"I really love this country and it really bothers me to see some people tearing it apart," he says. "Canadians will be forced, in a very short period of time, to show our love for this country."

BY 1980

By Canada Week 1980, Canada's immediate future should be known, Quebec Premier Rene Levesque has announced the Parti Quebecois government will hold its referendum on Quebec separation next spring.

Mr. McDermid is confident his "gut feeling" that Quebecers will vote to remain in Canada will be realized.

"I'm prepared for a very exciting year in Canada. This could be a turning point in Canada's future," he says.

"There will always be a Canada. There are just too many federalists and too strong a federalist force in Quebec for Canada ever to fall apart," Mr. McDermid says.

There are some people in English-speaking Canada whose attitude towards Quebec is "let them go," he says. This animosity towards Quebec is based on "real or imagined" complaints, he says.

The bottom line for Quebecers, he says, is the preserva-

tion of the French-language rights in Quebec and other areas in Canada where French is widely-used, and he says he supports the French on this point.

However, he says, Quebec should not be given preferential treatment at the expense of other Canadian provinces.

And, he says, "there is no need for every Canadian citizen to be bilingual."

Mr. McDermid says the separatist movement in Quebec is a youth movement. For this reason, he says, today's youth will lead the way in shaping Canada's future.

Youngsters in Quebec and all Canadian provinces should be sent on more exchange programs so they do not become suffocated with strictly

local concerns.

"One of the first things (Ontario) kids tell me when they come back from an exchange in Quebec is they don't hate us there."

Mr. McDermid, public relations head at Ontario Place before resigning to serve as MP, says a handful of Quebec students, some strong separatists, have been hired each summer to work at Ontario Place. By the time their summer stint is up, he says, they leave with a different outlook on English Canada, because, for many of them, it is their first exposure to the Canada outside Quebec's provincial boundary.

More exchange programs should be offered, he says, "instead of trying to teach a 50 or 55-year-old bureaucrat French."

Mr. McDermid says his Brampton constituents are "optimistic about the country. They obviously feel there is hope for Canada. If people had given up on Canada you wouldn't have had an 81-per cent turnout at the polls here" (for the federal election May 22).

Having both the French and English languages participating in the formation of Canada puts our country in a unique situation, Mr. McDermid says.

"Maybe now people can appreciate more what Sir John A. Macdonald did to get a spirit of co-operation between the two languages," he says.

Because Canada is so immense physically, Mr. McDermid says, there will always be regional differences.

"We'll always have this diversification, but we'll always have one Canada. Canada has to be a country of compromise," he says.

"This is probably the most difficult time to govern because of the diversity, but a common bond is still there among Canadians."

Canadians should be thankful as well as proud of our natural resources, Mr. McDermid says.

"We're a country that's got a little bit of everything. We have great natural resources as well as some great human resources which need tapping," he says.



BALLOON BELLE

Patrl Brown, 5, turned up in her clown suit with a bunch of balloons as big as herself to take part in Ballinafad's Canada Day parade Sunday.

Major burglary nets equipment

A break-in outside Norval netted burglars entertainment equipment with an estimated value of \$3,500 Thursday.

The break-in occurred some time between 9:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. The burglars gained entry to the house by breaking a window in the rear door.

An estimated \$467 was stolen from a basement shelf in Ego Fashions last week. The money was stolen some time between 7:30 and 8 p.m.

A five by six foot glass window was broken with a beer bottle at the Holland Shop in Acton on the weekend.

Vandals gained entry to Varian Associates through an insecure door, and smashed a wire glass door once inside, setting off the alarm. The alarm frightened the suspects away. Damage is estimated at \$100.

Charges were laid against seven people following disturbances at the Dominion Hotel in Acton.

A Canadian flag and an "Elmer the Safety Elephant" flag were stolen from the front lawn of St. Francis of Assisi School. The flags are valued at \$30.

DURING DAY

A Lawnboy lawnmower was stolen from Acton Home Hardware some time during the day June 28.

Someone tried to break into Young's Pharmacy on Main Street south in Georgetown, by pulling out the air conditioner at the rear of the store. The concrete sill on which the air conditioner was seated was

broken. Damage is estimated at \$50.

The supervisor at the Canada Employment Centre for Students reported a break-in at the office in Guelph Street. Some items valued at a total of \$25 are missing.

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