

The Constitution

French against English, and to what end? Is it so that one day we may replace the Queen and pass the crown on to an emperor?

The time has come, not to bestow a crown, but to bell the cat who so arrogantly and flippantly suggests that, if the nation is destroyed over the issue of patriation, it was not worth saving in the first place.

Are we to sit submissively and allow one man to decide whether this country is worth saving, the very man who is pushing this country to the brink of destruction? Are we that placid? Are we that timid? I think not.

The dividing tactic used so effectively in the past is now being recognized, becoming fully understood and being acted upon. There has developed a groundswell of citizens in this nation who are coming forward and volunteering to place the bell around the cat's neck. Indeed, there are many who have a strong desire to hit him over the head with it. There is no man or woman in this country who should have the power to single-handedly determine what is best for the others. No one man or woman should be allowed to assume such power.

This is particularly true of a man who consciously excludes any reference to a higher authority. This omission, in itself, is highly revealing. The charter of rights, the one that has been proposed by this government, makes no mention of the fact that this country was founded upon the conviction that God and not the government is supreme.

The Fathers of Confederation went back to Psalm 72, verse 8:

He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

The Fathers of Confederation, the men who created this nation, had no trouble accepting the supremacy of God. They did not find the acknowledgement of God a threat to the way in which this country was to be governed. They were simply stating and reaffirming the obvious.

As one of the witnesses appearing before the Constitution committee so eloquently reminded us:

—we were made in the image of God, and that our basic human value comes from that affirmation and that we live constantly in the presence of God.

● (1620)

We do live in the presence of God. We swear solemn oaths in His name. Prayers are held each day in this House before we begin debate. Many members attend weekly prayer breakfasts. The Canadian anthem now asks that God keep our land. Easter and Christmas are times we celebrate with humanity and gratitude. The Bill of Rights of the late Right Hon. John Diefenbaker opens with these words:

The Parliament of Canada, affirming that the Canadian nation is founded upon principles that acknowledge the supremacy of God, the dignity and worth of the human person and the position of the family in a society of free men and free institutions—

And so on. The government rejected this party's amendment that those words be contained in the government's charter of rights. I believe that any charter of rights which is ultimately incorporated into the Canadian Constitution should make

reference to the fact that this nation was founded upon a belief in a supreme being. The charter of rights before us makes no such mention.

Not only does the absence of any reference to God in the proposed charter of rights upset and offend many Canadians; they are also distressed about the lack of mention of a more worldly nature. I speak now of property rights. I have been in the real estate business for many years and I know how important it is to many Canadians to own their own land. People in this country have always worked long and hard—and will continue to do so—and saved money so that they could own a piece of Canada they could call their own.

During my many years in the real estate business many new Canadians came to the area I have the honour to represent from the great city of Toronto. These people were from European and other countries where they had never had a chance to own any land whatever. I naturally assumed they were interested in buying summer cottages on lakes, but that did not interest them in the least. They wanted bigger pieces of land. They ended up buying 100-acre pieces of land with nothing much on them. There might have been roads to them and scrub bush, but that would be all. Some of those lots were purchased for \$700, \$800 or \$1,000. I can see how astute those people were because those lots are now worth ten times or more what was paid for them.

Mr. McKinnon: They had a good real estate agent!

Mr. Darling: That could be correct.

Property rights are a basic desire which creates strength in our nation. That basic desire is inherent in the spirit of free men. It is a basic desire which cannot and should not be denied. This government did agree at one point to accept our recommendation that property rights be enshrined in the charter of rights. Then for purely political reasons the government decided not to honour its commitment. The reason for the abrupt turnabout of the government is very clear. The reason was very opportunistic. The government needed the support of the New Democratic Party. The New Democratic Party informed the government it would not support the government's constitutional package if property rights were included, so what has been proposed is a charter of rights with a fundamental right excluded. Perhaps the government should correct the title of its charter; it should be the "charter of partial rights". The government's proposed charter of rights is not acceptable because partial rights are not acceptable.

The very fact that so many Canadians have spoken out against the charter only reinforces the position taken on this side of the House that patriation of the Constitution with an amending formula acceptable to the provinces should be the sole act of Parliament at this time. Only when this is accomplished should the issue of a charter of rights be dealt with. If the constitutional package is divided in this manner, we will avoid the unnecessary difficulties which are now developing in our relationship with the British parliament.

There is no question that the British would be more than willing to respond favourably to Canada's request. For the life