

should have a charter of rights in the Constitution. We in the New Democratic Party have always favoured, in terms of policy, a charter of rights. In 1947 the government of Saskatchewan under Tommy Douglas passed such a bill. As I look at members in our own party, I know there are those who have been fighting for a charter of rights for a long time. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) has been fighting in this House since before I was born on issues such as a charter of rights. Therefore, I am happy that I can now stand with my generation and say that we do want a charter of rights. In fact, even the Conservative party with its Bill of Rights in 1960 indicated it favoured a charter of rights.

● (1630)

What about equalization? Everybody agrees that we ought to have equality of the human condition, whether in the area of health, education, or on such a vital matter as housing. I suggest that we examine where we can reason together. We feel equalization is important because our country is like a human body. We cannot cut off an arm or leg or undernourish any part of the body; every part of the body requires nourishment. Equalization ensures that there is this economic nourishment for every part of our country.

Resources is one other area of agreement. Before agreeing to send the resolution to committee, we in the New Democratic Party said we wanted to see some of the grievances of the west addressed. I refer here to my part of the country—Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. I am pleased with the role my leader played in taking the initiative and adopting the attitude that we could reason together. To the credit of the government, it was willing to participate in this reasoning together to see that we did get acceptance of amendments such as resource control amendments.

I want to focus for a moment on some matters of agreement on which we have reasoned together and on why we can support this present resolution. Section 56 provides that which every province has wanted: control of their resources. At the initiation of the debate on the resolution in the House of Commons on October 7, 1980, the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) said this:

—changes are absolutely necessary in the area of resources so that there may be access to indirect taxation... There must be a clarification of resource ownership.

This was stated before the committee had an opportunity to examine the amendment in detail. I am happy to say that this amendment was granted. The area of resource control was dealt with in the Constitution.

Therefore, I concurred with great pride when my leader, the hon. member for Oshawa, pleaded with some members of this House who failed to recognize the importance to western Canadians that this particular resource concession held for us. We are all aware of the fact that there have been Supreme Court decisions which have caused great concern amongst the provinces in western Canada. This amendment addresses that particular concern. Under this Constitution provinces will be able to levy indirect taxes on their resources. I feel this is a

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major concession. It is something we want for all Canadians. I underline the fact that this resource amendment is very critical. We are happy to see that provision in the Constitution.

I would like to deal now with the charter of rights and discuss fundamental freedoms. Everyone in the country, regardless of province, would say we deserve these. Maybe I could just underline one of them to focus in on the discussion. Much has been made of the question whether God is recognized in the Constitution. Section 2, under fundamental freedoms, says that everyone has the fundamental freedom of conscience and religion. It is true that man does not live by bread alone. Part of my view of Canada is that we should all have freedom of conscience and religion.

We have a religious heritage in this country. On March 23, 1980, when I spoke on the national anthem bill, I made reference to the fact that Sir Leonard Tilley had referred, in the initial discussions, to Psalm 72:8. At that time people were wondering what the name of our country should be, and he said that Psalm suggested the name "the Dominion of Canada." Referring to this Psalm, he said, "His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, from the river even unto the ends of the earth." There has been this recognition from the beginning.

While I am disappointed that the Liberal members on the committee did not vote to include the supremacy of God amendment, I would just like to point out that in 1914 Mackenzie King said:

With the Greek, let us measure our contribution to civilization in what we give to the humanities. With the Hebrew, let us believe that God continues to work through the centuries and that He may work for continents as well as men. With the founder of our faith, let us believe that all life is sacred and all human life but the reflected image of the Divine.

My colleague, the hon. member for Burnaby (Mr. Robinson), spoke in the House on February 23 and, in referring to the Diefenbaker Bill of Rights, correctly said, and I quote:

It was a Liberal member who introduced an amendment on the last day of the committee hearings to entrench that in the Constitution.

That Liberal member, a former high commissioner to London and Member of Parliament for Essex East at that time, Paul Martin, said in the committee:

It would seem to me, and I am open to correction, that in a bill of rights entertained and introduced by a country composed as we are of people who acknowledge the existence of God, we should not hesitate to confirm that fact in some way in this preamble. In the preamble which I put forward, reference to the deity is made twice, at the beginning and in the final paragraph.

My hope is that at some time in the future, if we do have a preamble, some form of recognition of what we believe in will be included in the Constitution. For the moment, I must say that I am happy with the entrenchment of freedom of religion in every province because it is important to my constituents. In my constituency there are two Hutterite colonies. I know the history of the persecution which they experienced in Europe, Russia and even in the United States. They were forced to come to Canada for refuge. They came to Manitoba and even to constituencies such as mine, the constituency of Dauphin. I feel very happy to be able to go to them and say, "You are welcome in my constituency; we are encouraging you to practise your religious freedom, something you have desired all of