

Adjournment Debate

● (2220)

In closing, I find it passing strange that the hon. member is so concerned about violations in other countries, yet was so unprepared to entrench the very things he speaks about in his own charter and Constitution.

Mr. Wenman: I am protected by common law here.

Mr. Irwin: Protection from harsh and unjust imprisonment, the provision of juries and due process could not be entrenched, in large part, because the hon. member's party did not want them entrenched. That is the situation. While he says, look closer to Canada, as we go from Kampuchea to Nicaragua, I would hope that he looks to Canada and is as concerned about entrenching the rights of the Jehovah's Witnesses—

Mr. Wenman: Aboriginal rights and Indian rights, where are they in the charter? They were taken out.

Mr. Irwin:—unions in Nova Scotia, the Japanese Canadians who were incarcerated, but would have been protected had his party stood up and been counted in his own country instead of looking at a country about which very few Canadians know. They know about their own country. They know that his party did not stand up when the bell tolled for human rights in Canada.

[Translation]

ENERGY—INQUIRY WHETHER REPRESENTATIONS WILL BE MADE TO QUEBEC TO REDUCE IMPACT OF GASOLINE RETAILERS' STRIKE

Mr. Eymard Corbin (Madawaska-Victoria): Mr. Speaker, on April 5, I asked the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) and the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) about the gasoline retailers' strike in Quebec and the resulting inconvenience to highway users from the Maritimes driving to Quebec and points west. In referring to the situation, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources pointed out that the tax on gas in Quebec was probably the cause of the mass protest actions to which Quebecers and inhabitants of neighbouring provinces were exposed, to varying extents.

On April 7, *Le Madawaska*, an excellent weekly which is printed in my riding, published a detailed story with a number of examples of the inconvenience experienced by travellers from New Brunswick and elsewhere in the Maritimes who wanted to go to or get back from Montreal or Quebec City.

The article said, and I quote:

—hundreds of travellers between Montreal and New Brunswick are stuck or out of gas . . . one hundred vehicles have slowed down traffic on the Trans-Canada Highway.

The vehicles referred to were those used by gasoline retailers, who, to all intents and purposes, were blocking the Trans-Canada Highway. To quote the paper once again:

—at Lake Baker-Les Étroits on Saturday, protesting retailers seized jerricans of gas from the trunks of cars, promising to return them as soon as the dispute was settled.

The paper goes on to say, and I quote:

We note that the roadblock set up by the protesting retailers was illegal and was lifted following action by the Quebec Provincial Police.

Of course I understand why Quebecers are protesting as much as they can against increases in the tax on gas which are really enormous compared to the price of gas in neighbouring provinces. I certainly cannot blame the gas retailers, but I want to use this example, Mr. Speaker, to point out once again the vulnerability of the concept of free movement of citizens, goods and services in this country. Perhaps I may remind the House that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms—I have a copy here—says, and I quote:

6. (1) Every citizen of Canada has the right to enter, remain in and leave Canada. (2) Every citizen of Canada and every person who has the status of a permanent resident of Canada has the right

(a) to move to and take up residence in any province;

That is the clause that I want to discuss tonight. We cannot and we must not condone either private or government action aimed at preventing the free movement of Canadians within Canada's borders. This is not the first time there have been unfortunate incidents involving New Brunswick and Quebec.

I still remember the case of students from New Brunswick who after several years of practical training in Quebec were turned down for jobs in Quebec because their home address was in New Brunswick. Well, this is also against the principle defined by the Charter of Rights, since Section 6(3) prescribes, and I quote:

The rights specified in subsection (2) are subject to

(a) any laws or practices of general application in force in a province other than those that discriminate among persons primarily on the basis of province of present or previous residence;

Of course, the events I just described occurred before the proclamation of the Charter of Rights, but the fact remains that there is a rather disturbing tendency among some provincial governments and more specifically, the government of Quebec, which is taking rather questionable action in wanting to restrict the basic and fundamental rights of Canadians because they are not from Quebec, they are not living in Quebec, and are not Quebecers. This kind of discrimination I find more than disturbing. I see it as a danger to the unity of this country. I realize that Quebecers have a government that wants to divide the country, not to unite it, but it turns out that when measures of this kind are imposed on citizens of New Brunswick, they are usually francophones, since they happen to live in the areas bordering on Quebec.

Quebecers, and especially the Parti Québécois, cannot come to New Brunswick to preach a so-called independence for the Acadians if they also stop them at the border and prevent them from finding jobs in Quebec and use other tricks to prevent the