

*Canadian Citizenship Act*

paper. This is a natural phenomenon for people. In our parliamentary system, all actions are taken in the name of the head of state. Why should that most intimate, personal commitment, the oath of allegiance, be an exception to this rule? It is a fact that Her Majesty, and at other times His Majesty is part of the Canadian constitution. The Queen is far warmer, lovelier, more lively and therefore instinctively more worthy of allegiance than all the dry pieces of paper and legal judgments that many more learned and possibly more honourable friends could split hairs over until the end of time.

If Her Majesty is part of the constitution, surely it is sophistry to propose that we swear allegiance to all the dead or non-human parts of that same constitution and not the living part which is the monarch herself. I suggest the monarch is the keystone of the constitutional arch, as our Queen is the keystone in the arch of Parliament as well. Remove her and you remove the human symbols of all for which we are striving. And for what result? Just for the record, and to hearten myself and other people who feel as I do, I would like to quote two items and point out that this is an academic debate, thank God, and nothing more. First, we will talk out this bill and forget about it.

• (1740)

Second, so far as the government is concerned, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has said that the monarchy will last as long as this government lasts. Presumably he means by that, any government that he heads. He also said that the government's position was made quite clear in a white paper which was submitted to the constitutional conference in 1968 and again in 1969. He declared that the new constitution of Canada, if we were to have one, would be a monarchy and the head of state would be the Queen or the King. So the government has been on record for more than two years as taking this position. So long as we have a monarch, the keystone of the constitution, it is to the monarch that we shall swear allegiance and to no one or nothing else.

There is a human aspect to this question that cannot be ignored. All parts of Canada have been a kingdom since white men landed here in the sixteenth century. There were parts of Canada that were kingdoms among the Indians also, because they did not all elect chiefs or councils. Thus, the majority of Canadians have always sworn allegiance either to the crowned head of France or the crowned head of Great Britain or the crowned head of Canada. This is the one true, continuous Canadian fact of identity for over 400 years. Those of us who have kept up on the subject of Canadian identity should meditate on that fact. We have had all sorts of other things: we have had responsible government, we have built railroads, we have put satellites up in the sky, we have brought in old age pensions, we have tried to make life easier, we have fought with people in various parts of the world, we have had good times and bad times; but the one thing we have had continuously for over 400 years is a crowned head to whom we Canadians swear allegiance.

If we are looking for a Canadian identity then, the first thing to do is spotlight our continued allegiance to the Crown. I would suggest throwing away a lot of other

things before we throw away that. This is part of our flesh and blood.

**Mr. Prud'homme:** Yours.

**Mr. Osler:** Do not say "Yours," my friend. You have had a monarchy in Canada for longer than I have, because your people have been here longer than mine. A great deal of good blood is flowing in our present monarch which happens to be blood which came from France in the first place. We have all come from the same place and we have the same traditions, so do not say that it is mine, not yours. We are also all going to the same place in the end.

**Mr. Allmand:** I don't know about that.

**Mr. Osler:** There may be different annexes, but it will be the same place. For a Canadian to swear allegiance to the Canadian constitution would be an unnatural act and flying in the face of our history and traditions. I suggest that the monarchy is a very simple fact of life which can be explained to any new Canadian who does not understand it. It can be explained far more easily than to tell them that we find a pressing urge to change our whole way of life and our structure of being.

It is no accident that the most stable, most politically mature nations of this world are almost all constitutional monarchies. Those who speak French in our country have a great deal for which to be thankful. One of the things for which they should be thankful is that, because they have lived continuously under a monarchy, they have missed all the convulsions, bloodshed and terrible things that have occurred in their mother country since France ditched the monarchy instead of making it more pliant and suitable to modern times. So they have no relationship whatever to republicanism. By being Canadian, they escaped that black period of time through which their mother country went. Others have come to Canada from countries with absolute monarchies. It should not be too difficult for them to see that our monarchy is not an absolute monarchy and that their prejudices and fears are groundless here.

Do we want deliberately and unnecessarily to reject our own nature as a nation and to join the ranks of the constitution worshippers, almost all of whom have at some time in the relatively recent past got into serious trouble? There is nothing much wrong with Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Holland or Belgium—constitutional monarchies all. Most of the happiest and most progressive countries are constitutional monarchies.

We will not solve our problems by throwing out our monarchy or by swearing allegiance to some empty piece of paper. People with a lot of happy experience, relatively speaking, compared with many other countries of the world have found that to stick with the monarchy is a pretty good thing.

I will be accused of sentimentality concerning this subject. This I deny. I will own, however, to strong sentiment, which is quite different from sentimentality. I have strong sentiment where our oath of allegiance is concerned, for personal relationships of one human being toward another.