

country in which there would be no more national institutions than in a loose alliance of semi-sovereign states.

That, I think, is distressing. If we can seek to find a formula for the linguistic and social discontent of one part of the country, or the disquiet of one part of the country, by saying that all of the units can take the same thing, what do we have left?

I have seen, I think, far too much diminution of the central government; far too much expansion of the powers and prestige of the provinces. One hears that the provinces want undisputed control of this, and undisputed control of that. I am concerned that solutions to social problems will benefit Canadians of every sector on a national basis. I do not want to see a situation in which a rich province can mount a fine medicare program leaving us to wonder what will happen to the sick people in the poor provinces. Is poverty to be the sole ingredient of our patriotism?

These are matters we must address ourselves to. You never really find a campaign utterance that gains the attention it deserves, but I thought the most important thing that the then Prime Minister Mr. Clark said during the federal campaign was in his Spruce Grove speech in Alberta when he spoke about the absolute, essential need of having a careful look at what should be done in this country in reference to jurisdiction, when he spoke about the Rowell-Sirois report as a sort of example of the scope, not the resolution but the scope, of the problem.

The sad part of all this is that while we might say the provinces are equal in constitutional power, they are vastly different in economic strength.

Confederation, honourable senators, is many things and everyone here could describe what Confederation means to him, but one thing surely is essential and that is that it is a sharing of the advantages and disadvantages of the natural resources of the regions.

I liked an aspect of the Prime Minister's remarks which I read in the *Globe and Mail*. Since our rules forbid us to refer to the debates in the other house—

Senator Flynn: No.

Senator Macquarrie: Yes, I thought they did, Senator Flynn. I am referring to the situation where he used a word that has almost dropped out of existence, and that is the word "patriotism". We all cherish our provinces, or communities; but our founding fathers were right when they saw the proper, and, indeed, I believe the essential, priority in the federal state, which is that the whole is greater than the parts and, indeed, the sum of the parts. If we do not feel this in our hearts and express it in our institutions, the true north, strong and free, will not long endure; nor will a loose alliance of quasi-independent provinces be a worthy or even respectable successor.

● (1530)

The situation is extremely delicate. The people of the other nine provinces are very much part of the whole question in

Quebec today. Yet, while they are part of the question, they cannot be, nor should they be, a part of the debate.

I read of an Alberta minister saying the other day that Canadian political leaders in the nine provinces are walking on eggs for fear of playing into the hands of René Lévesque. In my view, a national referendum would be an horrendous thing. It would put us into a confrontation that we could do nicely without.

Of course, we end up by saying that Quebecers must make their decision. But surely most of us in this chamber, or in the nine provinces—indeed, in Canada—believe that any Canada without Quebec would be a pale and weakened development of the great entity which our political forefathers brought forth. Surely it would be a supreme lack of faith, in them and in our country, if we should fail in 1980 to retain that which under very adverse circumstances they wrought in the period from 1864 to 1867.

I have no special claim to being a great Canadian, but for years I represented Prince Edward Island, the cradle of Confederation, where it all began, and I do not want to live to see the dreams of those men shattered or diminished; nor do I want my children to live in a time with fellow Canadians who are unable to sustain what the people of an earlier day were able to build.

We must fulfil our destiny as a strong, united country. Let us not lose faith. I have never been afraid, honourable senators, in making a speech, to call upon the words of someone who has expressed it more nobly. John A. Macdonald was reputed to be a crafty, canny politician; but he was much more, and he showed it in the few words which he uttered in the House of Commons the year before he died—indeed, it was less than a year. He said:

If I had influence over the minds of the people of Canada, any power over their intellect, I would leave them this legacy: Whatever you do, adhere to the union. We are a great country and shall become one of the greatest in the universe if we preserve it. We shall sink into insignificance and adversity if we suffer it to be broken. God and nature made the two Canadas one. Let no factious men be allowed to put them asunder.

Hon. John J. Connolly: Honourable senators, may I first congratulate His Honour the Speaker on his appointment to the Chair of this chamber.

Mr. Speaker, all of us in this chamber who know you—and all of us do—are fully aware of your distinguished career as a minister of the Crown and, before that, as a leader in the trade union movement in this country, which has meant so much to Canada. I am thinking particularly of your dedication to, and your self-sacrifice for, the promotion of a truly noble Canadianism, a Canadianism in which you envisage the participation of people from all the provinces, and more particularly from your beloved province of Quebec. You have always wanted the people of Quebec to play their full part in Confederation. We are honoured by your appointment as Speaker of the Senate.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.