

Provincial Conferences will have worked out a method for the control within Canada of the Canadian Constitution, and agreement has been reached as to incorporation in the Constitution of a national Bill of Rights.

Such agreement may not be as difficult or unlikely as it might at first appear, for such a Bill of Rights in the National Constitution would contain only the simple first principles of human rights and freedoms, matters upon which there is already very general agreement.

It is realized that this procedure will take time, however great the goodwill and concurrence of those in authority, and however desirable the objective.

Declaration of Human Rights.

Your Committee therefore recommends that, as an interim measure, the Canadian Parliament adopt a Declaration of Human Rights to be strictly limited to its own legislative jurisdiction. Such a Declaration would not invade the Provincial legislative authority, but it would nevertheless cover a very wide field. While such a Declaration would not bind the Canadian Parliament or future Canadian Parliaments, it would serve to guide the Canadian Parliament and the Federal Civil Service. It would have application within all the important matters reserved to the Canadian Parliament in Section 91 and in other sections of the British North America Act. It would apply without limitation within the North West Territories.

A Canadian Declaration of Human Rights could follow in its general lines the Preamble and certain of the articles of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights subject to the reservations expressed by the Canadian Delegates at the United Nations. It would declare the right of every one in Canada to life, liberty and personal security, the right of equal treatment before the law, to fair trial, to freedom from arbitrary interference with one's privacy; family, home and correspondence; to freedom of movement, to a nationality; to obtain asylum from persecution; to found a family, to own and enjoy property; to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; to freedom of opinion and expression; to peaceful assembly and association; to take part in the Government of the country directly or through representatives chosen at periodic elections by universal and equal suffrage. The Declaration would also state that every one in Canada has duties to our Community and is subject to such limitations as are determined by law, for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and of the general welfare and good government of Canada. Finally, the Declaration would specify that none of its provisions may be interpreted as tending to permit any group or person to engage in activity aimed at the destruction of the rights and freedoms of the people of Canada.

Such a Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the Canadian Parliament would solemnly affirm the faith of all Canadians in the basic principles of freedom and it would evidence a national concern for human rights and security. Judges would recognize the principles of such a Declaration as part of Canada's public policy, and subsequent Parliaments would hesitate to enact legislation violating its revered principles. To adults it would convey a feeling of security and children would memorize its terms with pride.

Canada should lead the world in reliance upon the rule of law, in her respect for human rights and in her care for fundamental freedom, and in a love of liberty. Her adoption of a National Bill of Rights in due time would set an example which would enhance her status among the nations and which might lead to similar progress by others.