

*The Constitution*

belongs without bothering to trouble any other country with our own concerns. Once home it should be amended by Canadians using an amending formula agreed upon between the federal government and the provinces.

One aspect of our present federal arrangements which I feel is imperative to maintain is our constitutional monarchy. Any attempt to alter or downplay this tradition, which is one of the main reasons our country is the best place to live in the world, will only worsen the division which exists. The monarchy is too deeply rooted in our culture and history to be removed from our political experience. There is no room in Canada for a threat by cunning people, or government, to upset political order and remake it according to their desire. I am opposed to any efforts to reduce the role of the monarchy. I support the retention of Her Majesty as the head of state in Canada.

The Loyalists took pride in their love of God and the monarch. They stood up for what they believed in to protect a way of life they cherished for future generations. I am honoured to be a descendant of such a group of people. I appreciate the Canada they strove to create. I do not forget or take for granted their sacrifices. I think we owe them and other pioneers the decency and respect to preserve the tradition and way of life they helped pass on to us.

No system of government is perfect, Mr. Speaker, but I, for myself, feel that our system is one of the best. I am proud of our heritage and tradition respected here and around the world. Let us remember where we came from so that we can better know where we are going. The government seems to have lost sight of this, but the people of Canada have not.

I think that with the concerns of many over the issue of women's rights and opportunities for women, we tend to forget the capable and highly respected standard set over the years by our gracious head of state, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second. With estimates of somewhat over half our national population being women, their place as equal human beings is certainly established in Canada and should be ensured for the future. There are differing views put forward concerning the need for the rights of the unborn child and I would suggest that our time would be better spent considering all aspects of this issue.

For the people of a country to make the constitution work they must respect what it stands for. To command this respect it must be just, fair and inspiring now and into the future. The people must trust their government to lead them into that future with promises, rights and freedoms the Constitution promises to uphold.

The present government has made and broken many promises in this and previous Parliaments. It has consistently refused to deal with such serious matters of concern to Canadians as high interest rates, inflation and unemployment. There is no comprehensive industrial policy to help Canadian business and industry plan and grow for the future. Canada's standard of living has slipped and our economy has seen better days. The present government, under the Prime Minister, has had more than enough time to deal with these matters.

Canadians are now being confronted with constitutional proposals put forward by this same government which has done so little for Canadians over the years. How can Canadians put trust and faith in such proposals from such a government? The answer is they cannot. How can Canadians respect a government which tries to get a foreign country, for which Canadians have long-standing respect, do its dirty work and then, at the same time, blame that country for every little thing that crops up? Great Britain deserves better treatment than this, Mr. Speaker. We owe her that much.

National unity, our economy and energy self-sufficiency are all suffering because the government will not listen to Canadians. In Canada we have great potential, with energy sources, raw materials and human resources that any country would be proud to possess, yet the federal government cannot digest reality. Mr. Speaker, the present government with its myriad of ivory-tower, short-gain programs is harming Canada, a country about which I feel very strongly.

The government should listen to reason on the constitutional issue and patriate the BNA Act to Canada, with an acceptable amending formula, with the provinces in Canada to make amendments in Canada. This would be the better course for Canadians. Patriation could be achieved quickly and the government could get on with the real issues facing Canadians, providing leadership, support and direction so that industry and business can plan for the future.

The present government has been nipping away at the Canada we know and love for some time now. Little changes here and little changes there gradually over time are taking their toll. I, along with many other Canadians, do not like what I am seeing and I am concerned for the future of our country.

Mr. Speaker, may I call it ten o'clock?

● (2200)

## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

### GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES—QUERY RESPECTING INCREASES

**Hon. Sinclair Stevens (York-Peel):** Mr. Speaker, my comments tonight centre on a question and answer, as recorded in *Hansard* of February 24 at page 7606, between myself and the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen). At that time I was questioning the Minister of Finance concerning some statements that appeared to be quite misleading in his address to a luncheon meeting of the Canadian Club of Montreal on February 23.