

Mr. COTE (Matapedia-Matane): If I may ask the hon. member a question, when this quotation was read was the leader of the opposition still the Liberal chief of the Manitoba government?

Mr. BENIDICKSON: That is correct, but I may say quite a change has taken place since that time. The leader of the opposition was enlisted in the hope that he could sell progressivism to the old guard of the Tory party, but I am afraid he has found that difficult, as we can see by his meaningless phrases on this crucial issue today. I am afraid Toryism has sold Conservatism to the Progressives.

If anybody stands out in the public mind today as the champion of the autonomy of the provinces; if there is anyone who would lead the public to believe that the provinces had been injured in some way by reason of these proposals, it is the premier of Ontario. I have done a little research, and I find that even in 1941 the views of the present leader of the opposition and Mr. Drew were not very dissimilar. In 1941 Mr. Drew, as leader of the official opposition in the province of Ontario, had views apparently quite the opposite of those he holds today. He went to Halifax—I imagine the climate was nice at that time—just at about the time of the Manitoba election. I looked up the records here in the house, and I find that his speech was given considerable prominence. Hon. members may be surprised at the headline: "Drew urges authority be centralized." He went on to say:

Remedying Canada's system of overgovernment by more centralization of authority and attention to post-war employment problems were urged by Lieutenant Colonel George Drew, K.C., soldier, writer and leader of the Ontario opposition, describing Canada's overgovernment as the most colossally incompetent system in the world.

Then he went on to say:

What we need greatly is to look at government from a business viewpoint, paralleling methods that a private business head office and nine branch plants would employ to promote more efficiency.

I am sure he would rise in all his hauteur today if anybody suggested he was operating a branch plant in Toronto for Mackenzie King and Company, with head offices in Ottawa. On that occasion he concluded his speech by saying:

Canada's main problem was its decentralized governmental system, and the speaker declared a solution to that problem would ensure continuance of the national structure.

[Mr. Benidickson.]

Probably at that time he thought, instead of stopping at Queen's Park, he would not be beaten out by the present leader of the opposition, so he was thinking in terms of the national party. Then I need hardly remind the house that in the province of Ontario no newspaper supports the present viewpoint—not the past viewpoint—of the premier of Ontario as does the *Toronto Globe and Mail*. Mr. Drew's champion in that respect stands out predominant in this province.

I should like also to read a brief quotation from a speech which was given by a prominent citizen of Canada, who is also a resident of Ontario. With the permission of the house I shall alter just one word in my reading of this speech and after I have read it, I shall point out to hon. members the word I have altered. This speech is quoted as follows:

The Premier of Ontario is head of an unwieldy and costly government in the wealthiest and most fortunate Canadian province. It is an organization whose expenditures run close to \$100 million annually. He is a clever man and knows well that the provincial government systems are altogether too costly, totally unnecessary and one of the principal causes of disunity in the country. . . . I strongly urge him and all other provincial leaders to look squarely at the facts, provide some evidence of real public service, and let us get busy and scrap this expensive provincial system. National unity must come from within the provinces. Let us not, you and I, the people, be deceived by this clap-trap talk of provincial rights. It would be named better as politician's rights.

And later:

The greatest service the Premier of Ontario could do for Canada, and something which would carry his name into history as a public benefactor, would be for him to state publicly what we all know; that our provincial governments are political misfits, that they are unnecessary duplications, luxuries we cannot afford, and endless causes of disunity.

In concluding his remarks, the speaker said—that if the people of any part of Canada get into trouble, all the country must assist them. We could not shirk our responsibilities as fellow Canadians.

I promised hon. members that I would explain where I had used one word in substitution for the word appearing in the quotation. I used the words "Premier of Ontario" where the speaker actually used the words "Mr. Hepburn." But the speaker was Mr. George McCullagh, publisher of the *Globe and Mail*, who made the speech on January 22, 1939.

Mr. Bracken, Mr. Drew and Mr. McCullagh—the chief champions of what they call provincial rights and provincial autonomy at the present time! What do they use as the bogey on which to hang their hats with respect to