

*The Address—Mr. Jamieson*

This belief is not foreign to us in Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker. Our forefathers may well have invented it. No people have clung more tenaciously to their traditions or worked harder to wrest a living from what we all know can be a cruel sea and a stern and forbidding land. By joining with you we have reaffirmed a truth that is as old as confederation. We Newfoundlanders, I believe, have demonstrated that in order to gain the new it is not necessary to disregard or eliminate the old, that new experiences can enrich an established and proud culture. Today, Mr. Speaker, while we in Newfoundland continue to give our loyalty to the land that made us we are totally committed also to the broader national objectives with which we are all so deeply concerned in this house. Thus, I suggest that the promise of confederation has been renewed and also the wisdom of its founders vindicated.

The speech from the throne made reference to the importance and value of unity with diversity. No Canadian embraces this concept with more enthusiasm than Newfoundlanders. We know that if we are to preserve those rights which we hold so dear we must show the same respect for the rights and distinctive ways of other Canadians.

The speech from the throne makes many references to the various aspects of federal-provincial relations. It seems to me that among the most important of these are the plans to continue study of the involved constitutional question. To the extent that the layman thinks about this matter, I believe it creates a measure of bafflement and perhaps vague concern—indeed, perhaps something of both.

It is imperative, of course, that this country have a workable charter, but I suggest that unless it reflects a true consensus and unless it is the product of painstaking deliberations it may well be a patchwork of harmful compromises seeking vainly to meet diverse and transient needs. It has become commonplace to say that Canada is in a period of transition, but the statement is no less true on that account. In these circumstances the decision to refer this matter for further intensive study and exploration with the provinces is a wise one.

What we do in this house, Mr. Speaker, to define national goals can have an immeasurable effect upon the resolution of constitutional problems and questions. We represent all the people of Canada. I believe we know better than most what Canadians want for their

country. I believe that in our frequent encounters with our constituents we learn that where needs exist it is not enough to tell our constituents that in denying them aid the various levels of government are performing in their proper constitutional manner. An appropriate division of powers is essential, of course, in our confederation, but I believe that Canadians would not long endure a system so rigidly enforced that it threatened our nationhood.

Let us make no mistake about it, Mr. Speaker. As one who has travelled widely in Canada, from the background I have described I am convinced that the basic desire of all Canadians is one of pride in the whole country. There is across this land an anxiety for and a commitment to unity. It would be tragic if specific regional needs, legitimate as these may be, were used to suppress the growing concern of Canadians with the well-being and welfare of their fellow citizens everywhere.

● (3:30 p.m.)

I am pleased that the speech from the throne reflects this broad outlook. I welcome the news of new regional programs. No part of Canada demonstrates more than my own riding the economic justification of such programs. Before confederation nothing stood between the people of Burin-Burgeo and stark, terrible poverty but an uncertain fishery. Today, with government assistance, many modern fish plants have been built. There are 12 within 500 miles in the southern part of my riding. Many trawlers equipped with all modern aids and equipment steam in and out of harbours where tall-masted schooners formerly sailed. Our fishermen have been freed of the curse of immobility by far reaching government programs, and in all respects a liability has been converted into an asset. A group of decent, hard working Canadians has been given an opportunity to earn a living, which is all they ask.

I say there is economic justification for these regional programs, and I welcome the strengthening of such organizations as ARDA and the Atlantic Development Board. The Atlantic Development Board has helped enormously in my riding. Today we have a massive new power development at Baie d'Espoir, resulting in the more ready availability of hydro with new benefits and new industries, the effects of which are felt throughout all Canada.

Perhaps the greatest economic revolution that has been brought about in my province

[Mr. Jamieson.]