

Private Members' Business

Deschambault is one of many small communities in my riding which are located right on the shore of the St. Lawrence River. It has a pier, a promontory called Cap Lauzon, as well as a church which was already there at the time. There is also a general store, the Magasin général Paré, which dates back to that period.

Let us go back 157 years, to July 16, 1837, in front of the general store which is located next to the old church, and let us listen to what the Patriotes of the time were saying:

Resolution No. 1. "That this assembly solemnly condemns the resolutions concerning the affairs of this province which were recently introduced by the minister in the British Parliament, which overwhelmingly approved them, hence sanctioning a principle which sooner or later will be used as a precedent to attack and destroy not only the rights and liberties of other British colonies, but even those of the English people".

• (1930)

There are in these historical statements some valuable lessons that might enlighten us about our current situation.

Resolution No. 2 is as follows: "That the resolutions introduced by Lord John Russell in the House of Commons in England on March 6, on behalf of all ministers, to authorize the Imperial Parliament to seize in the provincial coffers the monies from the labour of the people to pay public servants, most of whom have shown themselves unworthy of this country, and since passed by the Commons and the Lords, are a violation of the Constitutional rights and privileges of the people of this province".

Resolution No. 3: "That the adoption of these resolutions is in complete defiance of the just demands of the inhabitants of this province; that it destroys our confidence in the British Parliament, and that it should convince French Canadians that, in the future, they should expect from the United Kingdom no reparation for their grievances and no respect for their political rights." Unfortunately, you will agree, there is nothing new under the sun.

Resolution No. 4: "That the people of this country would bear the mark of degradation and would be enslaved if they agreed to be taxed, to be violently deprived by the public authorities of their money, which would then be distributed to perverse servants, without the sanction of their representatives who are the only ones to have the right to make appropriation of it". In those days, there was no deficit, no public debt. Still, very serious statements were already being made. What would these Patriotes of 157 years ago say today if they saw our current taxation levels and our use of public funds? Then, 157 years ago, people had good horse sense and I think we still have it today.

Resolution No. 5: "That the British Parliament, by passing a resolution to seize this province's revenues, was guilty of an outrageous violation of our most accepted rights, that it is our people's most pressing duty to resist this violation with all the

legal means—that is what was said—at our disposal, and that we should henceforth have the steadfastness to appeal no more to a body which has declared itself so resolutely hostile to our freedoms".

Resolution No. 6: "That for the preservation of these freedoms, it would be prudent to prepare ourselves for the difficulties that we may encounter by limiting our personal expenses and by promoting education, agriculture, industry, manufacturing and trade in this province." This certainly sounds very contemporary.

Resolution No. 7: "That when the revenues of this province are squandered to satisfy the greed of those who are always opposed to the wishes and the needs of the people, it is our duty to improve our domestic manufactures and to recommend their increasing use to our fellow citizens, just as it is our duty to avoid in so far as possible the products of those who pay duties".

Quebec's Patriotes were already showing us the way 157 years ago. There are many more resolutions, but it was a privilege for me to read in this House tonight these words so full of common sense that our ancestors wrote in difficult times and that can still guide us today.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to mention that the words I read tonight were written by Mr. Louis Gariépy, president, and Mr. N.G. Gauthier, secretary, and were published in *La Minerve*, on July 24, 1837.

• (1935)

[English]

Mr. John O'Reilly (Victoria—Haliburton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on Motion No. 257, the purpose of which is to recognize the historic contributions made by the Patriotes of Lower Canada and the Reformers of Upper Canada to establish a system of responsible democratic government in Canada.

I should like to begin by informing my hon. colleague from Verchères that the Government of Canada is by no means remiss in celebrating our historic heritage and encouraging all Canadians to do so. The government has already established a national day of celebration on which we mark the contribution made to the country by all Canadian patriots, be they anglophone, francophone, aboriginal or allophone. I am speaking of course of Canada Day.

Canada Day is a unique and appropriate opportunity to celebrate the contributions of all Canadians, including those who work for the establishment and continued evolution of our democratic system of government.

Thousands of Canadians also have the opportunity to celebrate Heritage Day in February and organize activities marking the richness and diversity of our common heritage. It is the