

National Centennial Act

say that he went into this matter of education like a cow in a rose bed or a bull in a china shop.

Here is what the member for Port Arthur said:

Quebec, like many other provinces, stands in urgent need of a new educational system.

What concern is it of his? What business has he to tell the province of Quebec what it should do in the field of education?

I am very happy to note that he has just come back. He told us: Stop complaining—

The member for Port Arthur was telling me just yesterday: But stop complaining about the English Canadians.

We are not complaining about the English Canadians, but when someone like the member for Port Arthur says it is urgent that Quebec, like the other provinces, get a new educational system, then I say to him that it is none of his business.

It is precisely because there are too many English Canadian members or citizens who wish to meddle in the affairs of the province of Quebec that there is today what might be called some sort of antagonism—

[Text]

An hon. Member: It is part of Canada, isn't it?

Mr. Gregoire: It is part of Canada.

[Translation]

But the educational system of the province of Quebec is under the exclusive jurisdiction of that province and not of the federal government.

We are not seeking the suppression of anything whatsoever in your educational system in Ontario. You can do as you wish. This is not our business.

There will be mutual understanding when everyone will mind his own business. Nowadays, everyone wants to interfere with the province of Quebec's business.

I note also that the member for Port Arthur said this:

The factor I want to hear about is whether all these screams, yells and howls—in connection with such program may be the reasons for the government not going forward with something that is long term and embracing.

Mr. Chairman, the other provinces are free to accept that program if they wish to do so. It is up to them; that is not our problem. Education does not come under the jurisdiction of the House of Commons or of the federal government but under the provinces.

If the latter wish to set up such a program with the help of the federal government, they are free to do so, but it is none of their business if the province of Quebec

chooses to establish a scheme of its own. That is precisely what is meant by "biculturalism": two cultures.

Language is the chief medium of culture. It gives birth to another way of thinking. But let us not to try to be all in the same boat, because it will become a melting pot.

If English Canadians want to develop in a certain way, they should feel free to do so. The province of Quebec wants to set up its own educational system, in keeping with its French culture and its methods for its own citizens. It should be allowed to do as it pleases.

I wish to stress this point: when everyone will actually mind his own business, then everything will be fine and it will be possible to get along, to co-operate and to build a nation where the two great races will be able to live side by side.

But let everyone start by minding his own business. Let nobody come and tell us what to do and we shall not tell others what they should do. That is a rather important aspect as far as the co-operation between the two races is concerned.

Mr. Fisher: Oh, oh.

Mr. Gregoire: The hon. member for Port Arthur seems to be up in arms. I challenge the hon. member for Port Arthur to mention a single example where we have indicated to the other provinces what they had to do. We have requested our share for ourselves, our share only according to our rights.

For instance, when have we tried to interfere with the customs system, the embassies or the consulates? Never. They are the responsibility of the federal government. When have we told the province of Ontario to do such or such a thing?

In the riding of Port Arthur for instance, can the hon. member for that electoral district mention a single instance? He will never find any. But let us look after our own educational system, our own roads, our own hospital system and everything we have at the present time ourselves, for ourselves and by ourselves, under the British North America Act.

The hon. member for Marquette (Mr. Mandziuk) said a while ago: Tell us just one thing that is wrong with confederation and we will be ready to change it. Well, what is wrong with confederation is that it was not carried out just as it is, it was not respected. Its true meaning was lost sight of and it was not applied and respected over the years, ever since 1867. That is what is wrong with confederation.

Let us go back, for instance, to 1942 when, if I am not mistaken, the federal government asked the provinces to lend it their sources