

*The Budget—Mr. Fisher*

forward a message to Ottawa asking that "Canadian" and "American" be deleted from the printed list of possible ethnic origins on the next census forms.

We will hope that some accommodation can be made to French-Canadian wishes to have statistical information on their particular language and cultural group. However, I hope the government appreciates the fact that many Canadians think of themselves as Canadians rather than as members of some ethnic group of hyphenated Canadian. In my own case, I happen to be a fifth generation Canadian. Probably my paternal ancestors came from England but if you came to figure out my ethnic nationality, what is it? What about the Irish, Scotch, Pennsylvania Dutch or any of these others that entered the strain? I would have a hard time in determining it.

To take my own constituency as an example, I may say that it is a real swirl of national backgrounds if you were going to carry the matter back and examine each citizen's antecedents. In one class a few years ago I happened to make this check. I had children whose paternal line apparently or actually—apparently as far as they knew—was linked with *Ukraine, Finland, Poland, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, Serbia, Macedonia, France, Russia and the British Isles.* What were they, even for statistical purposes or any other real purpose, but Canadians? I believe it is right that people like that should have the right to consider themselves as Canadians, simply as Canadians to declare or to register as such. I hope that point of view can be confirmed in the arrangement or in the change that may be made in order to accommodate this kind of protest that has come from the province of Quebec.

It is not in the same way that the governor of Alabama said, "Some of my best friends are niggers", that I say that some of my best friends are Liberals. It is not in that way at all. I was brought up in a Liberal family; I have voted for Liberal candidates; I have run errands as a boy for Liberals during elections; and I am sure some of my closest relations still vote Liberal. I took a full year at university studying Liberalism in its Canadian context. The biggest files I have in my filing cabinet relate to Liberalism and the Liberal party. It is with that intense interest that I should like to move on to an analysis of the Liberal party, especially in the light of the rally it has just had.

[Mr. Fisher.]

The Liberal party has not had too many rallies but I would suggest to the majority of the members of the house who are Conservative that they should go back and take a look at the previous records of such rallies which took place in 1893, 1918, 1948. There was a smaller convocation in 1943 that might be considered a rally and there was one in 1958. I think the Liberal rally of 1961 was a most important political event. I do not downgrade it at all. Political rallies are going to become more and more important in our democratic process. I think one of the reasons—and I will say this offhand—is that people notice their circus aspects possibly more than they do the traditional development of party position each day in the House of Commons.

This rally was an important event. It would seem to have confirmed the party leadership and made partial steps at least to a new party platform. One of the things it did was the bringing of several thousand Liberals from across the country to engage in open discussion. A sizeable achievement. I cannot comprehend the pundits amongst the Liberals or the press who have said they felt there were some risks in these open discussions. Surely the process of democracy is always risky, being in the open, but that is what the party should be doing, namely democratically discussing things out in the open. I would be shocked if at the convention that our group is going to enter into this August the discussions of policy were not out in the open. I would be surprised if the Conservative party rally in March holds its discussions in secret. It seems to me that the rally, in this sense of bringing people together for the exchange of ideas was a success for the Liberals and should be so recognized. I am delighted, of course, that it means that their organization is going to be strong and they are going to be able to go out to the hustings with a better organization and bags of money. I was elected in a good tight three-way fight and I think most members will be elected in the coming election in a three-way fight. We want the Liberals to have some strength for such battles.

At this point I should like to ask this question. What have the Liberals? They are a party that has a tradition of power in the country. A great many families pass it on from father to son. These loyalties endure for a time. That is one of the reasons why they will continue to have across the country a modicum of support. That support is no longer as important as it was, but it is important.

They have a great deal of strength in the province of Quebec, and it is very apparent