

*The Constitution*

Would that qualification to which I referred permit a repeat of the disgraceful treatment accorded to Japanese Canadians 40 years ago? Talk about the entrenching of rights in a constitution does not necessarily guarantee one will receive those rights. The counter-example is that in the American constitution, with those rights entrenched, the treatment of the American-Japanese was as bad as, or worse than, that accorded the Japanese in Canada. It took the Americans as long to redress the harm done as it did Canada. I agree the Americans did redress that harm in a better way than we did, in a larger way. But it took them as long, even though those rights were entrenched. So entrenchment by itself does not guarantee one will always receive those rights.

Why should there be a qualification on the right to be told with what offence you are being charged? I hope the government as well as all other members of the committee will want to look at that and improve upon it. There are many ideas in the constitutional proposal I agree with; I have illustrated the five principles that are there and the sixth that we feel must be there. While we will support the passing of the motion to establish the committee we will take full part in the proceedings of that committee and we will have amendments and proposals to make. We want to hear from and listen favourably to the suggestions and amendments made by members of the Conservative party and the Liberal party. We want to deal with other concerns.

I cannot vote against the principle of patriating our constitution. I cannot vote against the entrenchment of language rights. I cannot vote against a charter of rights being in our constitution. I cannot vote against equalization. But surely that does not prevent me, or any hon. member in this House, or any citizen of Canada, from expressing concerns about other provisions in the resolution and asking for, and achieving some success with regard to acceptance of amendments moved by the opposition parties or by the government which make improvements or corrections affecting concerns other than the principles I enunciated and which we feel we must support.

● (1530)

For example, there is a need to provide for equalization payments instead of the possibility, maybe the probability, of patronage pay-offs. The constitution must always be in touch with the people of our country; it must be a reflection and not a manipulation of the people who live here.

The Indian and native people in my part of the country have special concerns. Of equal priority to constitutional reform is the need to correct the greatest land fraud in history—the unpaid debt of land entitlements. In my province the federal government generously gave the Hudson's Bay Company 3.3 million acres of land and it swiftly gave the CPR ten million acres. It negotiated with the Indian people and they were entitled to 1.5 million acres through agreements which have yet to be lived up to. My colleague, the hon. member for Nunatsiag (Mr. Ittinuar) will speak further on this matter. Do these original peoples, whose roots in our country go back thousands of years, deserve that kind of treatment?

I want to deal with resources for a few moments. In order to understand why resources are important to me, to my party, to my province and, indeed, to all western provinces and, in effect, to all of the provinces and territories, one needs to go back in history before the discovery of oil or gas or potash. The national policy for this country, developed by Sir John A. Macdonald, goes back to the days when tariffs were used to encourage the growth of domestic industry in central Canada. An indivisible part of national policy has been the provision of transportation services to the maritimes and the west by the federal power.

Thus, this country grew by two principles: tariff protection for central Canada and efficient transportation for the west and the Atlantic. In recent years, however, the transportation system has not been adequate. As Mr. Justice Hall said in his eminent report, "Feelings exist that western Canadians are the source of someone else's affluence and to a degree they blame the transportation system for their frustration."

For one reason or another, the federal government has never understood this feeling. The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) seems to be unable to speak about western concerns without tipping over a bale stack in the process. During the constitutional negotiations this summer, the Prime Minister asked the west to trade resource dollars for federal investment in the transportation system. In all sincerity and kindness I should like to ask the Prime Minister why the west should pay twice—once through tariffs and once again through resource dollars.

The west has been vulnerable to boom and bust cycles in the economy. I remember the "dirty thirties"—I am a child of the depression. I saw farmers who lost their homes and their farms when four-fifths of the crops went to pay off interest on debt. In the past five years the west has been moving ahead and now that we are moving, our citizens feel others are holding us back just when we have the chance to diversify our economy with resources in order to avoid the boom and bust cycle.

The issue of resources is as important to us, Mr. Speaker, as language and culture is, not only to the people of Quebec, but to the rest of Canada. To us in the west at least, resources are just as important and through bitter experience, that concern has become equal to other concerns. Two decisions of the Supreme Court are part of our bitter experience. In 1973, the government of Saskatchewan levied a tax to capture windfall profits from oil companies. There was no objection to them receiving their cost of production and a reasonable return on their investment. In the CIGOL case, the Supreme Court supported a challenge to the Saskatchewan government's right to levy that tax. It was bad enough that we had to fight the oil industry and the oil corporations but in that instance the minister of justice of the day went to the Supreme Court on behalf of the federal government in support of the oil companies' case. And some people wonder why there is bitterness!

In the Central Canada Potash case, the Supreme Court struck down Saskatchewan's pro-rationing regulations which were originally introduced by a provincial Liberal government. Saskatchewan won both court cases in the lower courts but lost