

entrench such an inequity, but rather to recognize the rights of ordinary Canadian people to own their own homes, farms, and businesses. We do not want to make it possible for large corporations to use the Constitution to deny Government the power to act in the interest of ordinary Canadians.

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is still in the process of being shaken down in our courts. We are still unsure as to what many of its provisions mean. While that is happening, it is very important for us to watch closely to see in what direction the Supreme Court is moving with regard to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Since the Charter was passed I have not heard anyone say that if property rights had been entrenched things would have been much better. In fact, I am sure that if the entrenchment of property rights had been included in the words of this motion, things would have been a lot more complicated rather than better. If the Government brings forward a motion which will recognize, respect, and protect the rights of ordinary Canadians to own their homes, farms, and businesses, we in this Party will give it our full support. We have fought continuously against every force that has tried to take those rights away from Canadians and we will support any positive measures. We are not interested in entrenching the rights of large corporations to prevent positive measures for a more just society in Canada.

**Mr. Taylor:** I have a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** The Hon. Member for Bow River (Mr. Taylor) on a point of order.

**Mr. Taylor:** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. NDP Member left out his most important argument, namely, that it would be more difficult to nationalize if property rights were in the Charter—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** That is not a point of order. The Hon. Member for St. Boniface (Mr. Duguay).

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Léo Duguay (St. Boniface):** Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to congratulate my colleague the Hon. Member for Kitchener (Mr. Reimer) who presented a well-founded notion today.

[*English*]

The Hon. Member for Kitchener (Mr. Reimer) deserves a great deal of credit for the concern which he has shown about the entrenchment of property rights in Canada. His comments today are a valuable contribution to public discussion of this matter. This continuing public discussion is appropriate for resolving this important national issue. Many individuals as well as organizations and provincial and municipal Governments are interested in this matter. Regrettably, private Members' hour does not allow us the time to give their views the full and thoughtful consideration that they deserve, nor does it allow us to canvass properly the legal, economic, and social implications of entrenching property rights.

I hope that I will one day see in the House of Commons a private Members' hour which provides private Members with

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the chance to present a Bill and have it debated until it passes in the House. I believe we are operating under an antiquated set of rules. I congratulate the Hon. Member for Kitchener for bringing forward this matter in order that it may be discussed thoroughly, even though it may not be adopted in the House.

The Hon. Member for Cowichan-Malahat-The Islands (Mr. Manly) both missed the complex and overstated and simplified the partisan. I respectfully submit that the Member was bringing forth, on behalf of his constituents and many other Canadians, some concerns which people express. The Hon. Member tried to make the subject of this motion into a Conservative policy or non-policy. Let me say clearly that I have a great deal of respect for the Hon. Member for Kitchener who brings forth this very important issue. I fully support the principle of entrenching property rights in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

● (1750)

I welcome today's debate as an opportunity to comment upon some of those issues. I am committed to the idea of entrenching property rights in the Charter. The Progressive Conservative Party has long supported property rights. We recognize that property rights represent basic protection for all Canadians.

We all own property of some sort; be it simple personal possessions, a Canada Savings Bond, a car or a house. We are concerned about providing constitutional protection for the right to own and use property because the ownership and use of property is so pervasive in our society. In my view, this right is no less important than other rights already entrenched in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Property rights have a long history in our society. Their development marked the evolution from feudalism to democracy. The Hon. Member for Provencher (Mr. Epp), now the Minister of National Health and Welfare, commented on this when the Progressive Conservative Party introduced a motion in the House in 1983 to entrench property rights in the Constitution. I refer Hon. Members to page 24997 of *Hansard* on April 29, 1983, where the Hon. Member for Provencher is reported as having said this:

In the British context, private property has always been historically associated with the development of free institutions. It goes back to 1215, when the Magna Carta referred to it. It is referred to in the Bill of Rights of 1627.

The historical concept for property rights is clearly important. However, there is a fundamental interdependence between the right to liberty and the right to property. The right to property enables us to carry on and benefit from useful and productive activities independent of Government. With this economic freedom comes political freedom. We are less afraid to criticize the Government and give expression to our views when we know that the Government cannot arbitrarily control or affect our right to own and enjoy or use our property. The right to property has been recognized in many jurisdictions outside of Canada.

To this point I have spoken of property rights in the abstract. For ordinary Canadians, property rights are concrete.