

sons, our federal system was highly centralized. A succession of Privy Council judgments has turned it into one of the most decentralized in the world. Prices, wages, education, health and welfare, housing, resources, rentals, land use planning and much of environmental law have all been put under provincial jurisdiction. Federal spending and federal taxation powers and language rights seem to be the main sources of provincial distemper at the present time, and yet today the serious social and economic problems that we all face together require the maximum of co-operation between the provinces and the federal government.

I wholly support a charter of rights and freedoms being entrenched in the Constitution. It is of utmost importance that our aspirations in regard to human rights be included not only in the federal jurisdiction but also in the jurisdictions of all ten provinces. The federal government and all of the provinces now have human rights acts. However, we need a charter that cannot be tampered with except by the lengthy and thoughtful process that should be involved in constitutional amendment. In drafting such a charter, we should take into consideration the dangers involved in codification and be sure that we don't omit some important matters and include others that will not stand the test of time.

In the last resort, changes in the Constitution will not keep our country together and give us order and good government unless there is a strong will to forswear the present trend toward balkanization with all its evils. If we are to survive as a nation we must cultivate patience, tolerance, understanding and wisdom combined with an indomitable will to compromise and live together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and amity.

Although I approve the general thrust of the Speech from the Throne, I regret that there are certain omissions. It is a pity that the government has not accepted the moderate and sensible recommendation in regard to abortion made by the Royal Commission on the Status of Women.

It is unfortunate too that the Speech does not contain reaffirmation by the government of its intention to provide special programs, not only for youth training but also for women in order to bring them into the mainstream of Canadian life. During this period of economic difficulties and anxiety, we need to recruit all the skills and abilities we can muster. To do that we should develop the potential of people who have hitherto not been given the opportunity or the encouragement they need to make the maximum contribution to our society.

I understand the government's dissatisfaction with the high cost of unemployment insurance and the way some people are misusing it. I am, however, concerned that changes may discriminate against innocent people who have contributed to the fund in good faith and with some sacrifice. I fear that many working wives would be unjustly penalized by suggestions that secondary wage earners in a family be denied regular benefits. Some husbands would, of course, also be penalized since, among many young couples, the wife is often the primary earner. The Unemployment Insurance Commission has never made a study of women claiming regular

benefits, and this should certainly be done before any amendments to the act are made.

I have heard rumours, I hope unfounded, that pressure will be brought to bear on the government to deny women the right to maternity benefits. To do that would be a sad retrogression, an abandonment of a well-established principle of social justice. The inclusion of maternity benefits in the act was one of the most carefully considered recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. It has been supported wholeheartedly by women's groups throughout the country, by unions, and, of course, by working women who demand the right to have children as well as to contribute to the family income or to pursue a productive and useful career.

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The loss to the nation in consumer buying power will be considerable if married women in general, and women on maternity leave in particular, do not receive the benefits they and their employers have paid for. Children will also suffer since many mothers will be forced, by financial need, to go back to work instead of being able to stay at home for 17 weeks while they collect maternity benefits—that is, during the period when a lasting bond of love between an infant and its mother takes place, a most important development for the future happiness and security of a child. Many mothers will have to go back to work, because inflation has made two pay cheques a necessity in most families in order to pay off mortgages, feed the family and buy clothes for the children.

We must be on guard to make sure that, in our efforts to pass corrective legislation, we do not commit an injustice towards deserving people.

In conclusion, I feel impelled, driven by deep concern, to talk about the atmosphere of uncertainty, the lack of self-confidence and the neurotic anxiety prevailing in Canada at this time. The newspaper headlines cry havoc. People are howling, moaning and groaning about the state of the nation. Many wring their hands with despair at the suggestion that they may have to live more simply in order to help less fortunate men and women here at home or in other countries where the need is so great. They blame the government for the unholy combination of unemployment and inflation which is, of course, global and not confined to Canada only. They point with horror at the weakening of our dollar which is inevitably influenced by the weakening American dollar.

I think this attitude of pessimism and gloom is not only deplorably negative but extremely destructive. It is time we snapped out of it. It occurs to me that it might give us a better sense of proportion if we take a short look at what has happened to us in the past.

Between 1914 and 1918, 60,000 of our finest and fittest young men died in the mud of Flanders or were crucified on the wire in no-man's-land, and three times that number came home wounded in body or mind. During those days, Canadians knew the pity and terror of Ypres and Passchendaele, the agony and glory of what happened at Vimy Ridge. Then, too, there was the bitterness and resentment occasioned by the