

*National Centennial Act*

will cease to participate in the world fair? These are questions in our minds.

My point in rising, Mr. Chairman, is simply to express the distaste which we feel, not only at this subterfuge of bringing in patronage—that is a small issue and we can override that—but at the fact that we are amending the act because of an ultimatum.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Would the hon. gentleman permit me to ask him a question. Does the hon. gentleman not think that all this difficulty and the need for this whole measure could have been avoided had the right hon. gentleman, who was prime minister when the original legislation was enacted previously, consulted all the provinces, as his party is constantly admonishing us to consult, before they brought in this legislation? Then there would have been no difficulty about having a French version and an English version which meant something different, and we would not have had to take all this time. Surely we should all be glad to correct this little problem in semantics and get on with the important business of the house.

**Mr. Vincent:** That was the work of the opposition in 1961.

**Mr. Hamilton:** The Secretary of State, by rushing into this short debate in order to ask this question, remembers not that this matter was the subject of discussion for months before the act was passed in this house. Why did he not bring this matter up then?

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Because your party was the government.

**Mr. Hamilton:** There was all sorts of time to consult the provinces. I am making the point that it was the President of the Privy Council who a few moments ago said that the reason for these amendments was primarily because of an ultimatum from Premier Lesage; and I am making the point that the matter is too small to start a fight over—I agree with the Secretary of State there. I am saying that I have a feeling of distaste as a Canadian because this house has to do something by virtue of an ultimatum. I do not think the use of the word "ultimatum" is the way to correct errors.

I was one who many years ago during the war, when I found so many of my comrades overseas so unaware of the reason for the position they were in, in the lonely hours raised the question over and over again: What is it all about? As an older person knowing a little about the history of the country I took it upon myself in the tents to explain as best I could what it was all about. I know many others who knew a little about our story, did the same. History is the story of mankind and institutions. You cannot move

forward in history and achieve the fulfilment of your destiny without knowing your background.

We formed ourselves into a federal state in 1867 for better or worse. We are one nation now and this is our 100th birthday coming up. Many of us thought that if many of these men serving their country overseas did not know our story, what a failure there had been in Canada to tell the young people the story of their country going back to the days of the Indians and Eskimos. Do not stop at French Canada; go back to the very beginning. We knew our educational system had failed us, and one of the ways we thought we could put these ideas forward and make Canadians conscious once again of that story was to use the birthday celebrations of 1867. We should tell the story during the intervening years leading up to 1867. This was to be rededication of Canadian people to the great principles which brought people to this continent and enabled them to go through the pioneering and suffering they went through to build this nation. This was a contribution made by many people.

I had hoped at this time that we would be well on the way with our centennial celebrations. To me our centennial was not just a question of building buildings and holding fairs. To me the primary purpose was to educate the people of Canada, not only the million people who have come to our shores during the last 18 years, but the two or three generations who have been educated in our new system of education, where they learn little history. Let us turn back the clock a little and open up the pages of history showing what men in this country endured. This is the purpose of our centenary.

We will not quarrel with the government over the title. We will not quarrel with them over the type of people the appoint. I am sure they are all good people. But some would have liked to see the acceptance of the fact that maybe a few of them should have been from other parties than the Liberal party, that is all. We ask the government and the centennial staff to remember that their primary job is to tell all the Canadian people the story of what has happened in this country, the story of the men who went across the country, and the men who came after and developed it. This is a story which will bring pride to us all. I personally am proud to live in a country which has two legal languages. When I go abroad I am proud to say that in my country two colonial groups from two parent powers in Europe united to form one country and to welcome all other people. I am proud to say that, and I want every other Canadian to know this story.