

*The Address—Mr. Beattie*

not think they are all being asked by racist, red-necked crackpots. There are two sides to this important question and I believe each should be listened to.

On a more serious note, the possibility exists that there will no longer be a Canada to open its doors to anyone if we do not resolve our internal disputes. What does the future hold for Canada and Canadians? I listened to the former prime minister talking yesterday about famous Liberals and to the Prime Minister (Mr. Clark) talking about Sir John A. Macdonald. I should like to go back to Georges Etienne Cartier, one of the founding fathers of confederation and a favourite of mine who, when asked what he thought was going to happen, said "We are going to build a new nation and a new nationality". Sir, Cartier meant that this country would be Canada and that the nationality would be Canadian. We cannot settle for anything less than that.

We must divorce ourselves from those who conveniently forget that Canada was created despite the great problems of geography. It has been held together for more than 100 years by the free will, determination, courage, tolerance, understanding and sacrifice of the vast majority of citizens in every province. Anyone who would seek to gain political ends by provoking one part of the country against another must accept a very grave responsibility. Surely, it is the duty of every member in this House to promote Canada as a country unrivalled in its opportunities for freedom, security, wealth and equality. I am convinced that the will and the attitude of the people of all the provinces will determine whether these two great benefits, opportunity and equality, are to be destroyed, whether our nation is to break up in separate packages. For my own part, I subscribe to the theory presented on provincial equality and national unity by A. R. Kirby, who proclaims that Quebec knows, just as all of Canada knows save for a wilfully self-blinded but influential few, that the constant placation of *la belle province* for these many, many years is not because of our respect for its culture, the so-called "French fact" and so on. The core of the truth is that we are scared stiff of the alternative to what we recognize as our present Canadian unity.

I believe Quebec knows its identity and its destiny, or thinks it does, which amounts to the same thing. Some other provinces may also have reached the same point. What this country needs now is not the grovelling, snivelling, sentimental plea of appeasement which only insults the dignity of Quebecers and tramples whatever shreds of our own dignity that remain. Instead, we need the quiet self-assurance and courage which enable us to say: "This is who we are, and this is where we are going. If you think your interests will be best served by staying with us and sharing the journey, you are welcome to be aboard. We will be happy to have you. We would be lost without you. As you see, we respect you and your wish to preserve your heritage and your cultural identity. However, if you decide to come with us, we expect reciprocal respect from you for the many languages and cultures which exist in the other provinces."

[Mr. Beattie.]

Mr. Speaker, culture should not have to be propped up to controlled. Culture, like religion, is a private matter and will survive according to the devotion of its own adherents, not by false and abrasive artifices. Thus, in genuine mutual respect we can go forward in search of a future we have voluntarily sought as partners, rather than as cohabitants unwillingly bonded only by our fears.

● (1520)

I was delighted to hear the word "individual" permeate the throne speech and to hear the word "opportunity" in the speeches of some hon. members following that. I say this because I believe "individual" and "opportunity" are the two key words in the Canadian system, a sort of Canadian ideal, if you like. In my opinion, the most beaten up word in the Canadian system is "equality", mentioned by the previous speaker. All over this country I have seen people trying to translate the word and make it mean something else. By the wildest stretch of the imagination the people who founded this country, the founders of confederation, never expected everyone to go up the ladder of success the same distance. But they must have the opportunity to go as far as the next individual, and as individuals they have the right to put their foot on the first rung of that ladder and to go as high and as far as their ability, their willingness to work and some breaks will take them. When you have that in Canada, you have guaranteed opportunity; and when you have opportunity in Canada, then you have equality.

I think that is the least we can do for our people, and I think it is important that we at least recognize that fact rather than adopt the gloomy outlook of some of the members of the opposition that this government will destroy the Canadian system in, my goodness, four months! The danger, as I see it, is that we will be unable to transmit the system to future generations, not just this government but all of us. To put it another way, the system will not fail us but some of us might fail the system.

Today our country is facing big problems, but then which country is not? Most Canadians are bewildered by these problems, used as we are to constant growth, regular productivity increases, an unlimited supply of natural resources and social benefits. But occasionally one gets the impression that those who maintain that the world owes them a living are going to win. On top of all this, everyone seems to be blaming everyone else for this turn in our fortunes. While I agree that we may be faced with difficult times ahead, I cannot see anything being gained by encouraging the growth of a feeling of defeatism. The problems that must be dealt with call for a sense of confidence, a sense of hope and a spirit of courage and determination to succeed. We must refuse to let the odd setback interfere with our long range goal of a united and prosperous Canada.

The method of achieving this goal brings me to the story of a great Canadian. I am indebted to Kenneth Bagnell for this story. In one of Pierre Berton's recent and vivid books "My Country" there is a story of Samuel Hearne, from the same