

National Centennial Act

celebration a significant one. If we are to do this, it will call for the display of some of the things the Leader of the Opposition talked about, so that our people can see them—souvenirs, mementos of our history. It will call for an awareness on our part of the greatness of those who brought Canada into being and of our responsibility to bring into being a still greater Canada. All of this calls for a lot more than speeches and fireworks; it calls for the kind of social and economic planning which we proposed when we brought this matter up ten years ago and which we still say is the way to build a nation worthy of celebrating its 100th birthday.

I am grateful that the matter has been reopened today so that we have the opportunity to go into it and assess the position, and I hope the whole question of whether or not this will be done on a patronage basis will be brought out into the open. Surely this is no place for patronage. I was glad the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Lamontagne) replied so readily that the present members of the administration would not be removed. I was glad to hear him say that the additions mean just additions, not replacements. I hope a hard look will be taken at the larger group, the conference which is being formed, to make sure that those who are on the committee represent all the streams of life in this country. I must say that when I heard the Leader of the Opposition berating the government for its practice of patronage I wondered who was talking.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Remembering what the hon. gentleman's party did while in power in Saskatchewan, he ought to start close to home in that regard.

Mr. Knowles: I will come back to Saskatchewan in a moment. Through the efforts of some of my friends in the Progressive Conservative party, the government tabled a couple of interesting sessional papers a short while ago. They were lists of consultants—two lists, one in use by the present Liberal government and one which had been in use by the government which went out of office in April of this year. They are both interesting but I think the old one is more interesting than the new one. Looking at this list—and it is an official document now, sessional paper No. 255, part 1—I find that on page 1 appears the following sentence:

With regard to Newfoundland, effective immediately, all matters pertaining to Newfoundland will be referred to Mr. James A. McGrath, M.P. and I think at the time of referral he should be supplied with the name and address of the individual who is our normal consultant concerned with the particular problem.

I go over into Ontario, no this is in Quebec, just across the river, and I find an interesting situation there. There the consultant for a certain constituency, the member of parliament for which happened to be a Liberal, was a civil servant. I shall not give his name, except that he was "Dear Tom". Here was a civil servant working for the government of the day, handling the patronage for a particular constituency.

Then I look at Saskatchewan and I find, very interestingly, that the constituency of Prince Albert is listed, and the name of the member of parliament for that constituency is given. We know his name, of course; he is the present Leader of the Opposition. The consultant, the person handling these patronage matters, is listed. I will not give her full name but I will say that the list says she was to be addressed as "Dear Bunny". I thought the Leader of the Opposition was happy to have a dog around the house, but apparently it was "Dear Bunny" when it came to handling the patronage in his constituency.

I hope hon. members will forgive me for this light touch, Mr. Chairman, but I think it necessary after listening to this tirade on the part of the Leader of the Opposition against the present government on the matter of patronage. It is pretty hard to tell which of the two older parties is more adept at that practice. At any rate, I do agree with the Leader of the Opposition that there is no place for it in the administration of our centennial legislation.

Let me say briefly that I can see reasons for increasing the size of the board, as posed in this legislation. I think we should view sympathetically the suggestion that certain changes be made in the title of the legislation and in one or two other places. Like the Leader of the Opposition, I like the word "national"; but if it causes offence in certain places, and we want to achieve unity, let us consider the objection sympathetically. I would go one step further and suggest to the President of the Privy Council that it might even be better—it is not merely a compromise but is better—to change the name to the Canadian centennial act. We are only at the resolution stage, and I should like to ask the President of the Privy Council or the Prime Minister to look at this suggestion. I think we could improve the legislation tremendously and would avoid the appearance that we are avoiding the word "national" if in all places we used the word "Canada" or "Canadian", thus making it clear that what we are proposing to celebrate is the centenary of the confederation of Canada.