

*Dominion-Provincial Conference*

from circulation by taxation and otherwise, need not and should not borrow capital at interest as the means of financing government and public enterprise.

The government should create issue, and circulate all the currency and credit needed to satisfy the spending power of the government and the buying power of the consumers. The privilege of creating and issuing money is not only the supreme prerogative of the government, but it is the government's greatest creative opportunity.

By adoption of these principles the financing of all public enterprise, the maintenance of stable government and ordered progress, and the conduct of the Treasury will become matters of practical administration. The people can and will be furnished with a currency as safe as their own government. Money will cease to be the master, and become the servant of humanity. Democracy will rise superior to the money power.

*[Translation]*

Mr. Speaker, money will always be the prime concern of our governments, so long as they will not accept their responsibilities, for the constitution—and it is clearly stated—allows the provinces to assume their responsibilities. We are in favour of a study of our constitution, but we should first ask ourselves why the constitution has been so badly mis-handled until now.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

*[English]*

**Mr. Mark MacGuigan (Windsor-Walkerville):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to contribute to the debate touching a matter of such basic importance to our country. We are talking about the fundamental law of the land. People do not realize generally how important the constitution is in the lives of our citizens. As an observer at the recent conference, I was struck by the fact that even some at that conference did not understand the relationships existing between certain subjects under discussion and constitutional problems.

There are two ways of looking at the constitution. To illustrate my meaning I can do no better than repeat what Aristotle, the first philosopher to define a constitution, said. He first defined a constitution as the organization of a state in respect of its offices, and especially in respect of that particular office which is supreme in all issues. That was a juridical definition on the basis of which the Greeks, and later many others, devised classifications of constitutions falling into three good and three bad forms. Again in his "Politics" Aristotle gave us another definition of a constitution, when he said that a constitution is the way of life of a citizen body.

*[Mr. Rondeau.]*

This, it seems to me, is the most profound meaning of a constitution. That is the meaning of our constitution, and it is most necessary for our people to realize this today.

It is true, of course, that in some quarters of this country people are dissatisfied with the juridical concept of our constitution. But it seems to me that the dissatisfaction of some of our people goes beyond that. Some people feel that the constitution, which was originally made in 1867 and drafted in legal or juridical language, does not respond to the desires and aspirations of minority groups in Canada today. Not only the French Canadian group but many other minority groups in this country look forward to the enshrinement of their basic rights in a bill of rights.

In a booklet, "The Constitution and the People of Canada", which was released last week, the federal government has outlined proposals for a new constitution. I do not propose to read all the objectives set out on page 48. The first of those is:

To establish for Canada a federal system of government based on democratic principles.

If you like, you can call that democratic federalism. Federalism does not mean, as some seem to think, that the central government is all-supreme and that our orientation in all federal matters must be in the direction of Ottawa. Federalism is not the same as centralism, nor is it the same as the sum total of provincial rights or regional needs and aspirations. Federalism involves a balance between the central needs of our people and the various needs of the regions. The constitution drafted in 1867 struck that balance imprecisely when defining positions as between one government and another. Obviously, there is a considerable overlap in the exercise of federal and provincial powers. For example, the federal power under section 91, subsection 27, of the British North America Act with respect to criminal laws and procedures is very, very broad, and has been so interpreted by the courts. This power touches on matters considered by the provinces as coming within their jurisdiction. Of course, even broader is the general power to legislate with respect to the peace, order and good government of Canada. Similarly, section 92, subsection 13, vests the right to legislate with respect to property and civil rights in the provinces. That language might encompass practically every matter with which a provincial or federal legislature might be asked to