

*The Constitution*

For the benefit of those members who still feel that they can vote for this resolution, I would like to read Section 58(2) of Part VIII of this resolution. Those members who tell their constituents that they are voting for this bill so that we can bring home the British North America Act and amend it here in Canada will have a lot to answer for if this resolution is approved by the Parliament of the United Kingdom and imposed on our country. Section 58(2) reads:

The Constitution of Canada includes,

- (a) the Canada Act,
- (b) the Acts and orders referred to in Schedule I; and
- (c) any amendment to any Act or order referred to in paragraph (a) or (b).

There can be no doubt as to the meaning of Section 58. What we are debating here is the new Constitution of Canada, to replace the BNA Act of 1867 and all its subsequent amendments. Paragraph (c) clearly states that when the Parliament of Canada makes any amendments to our Constitution, assuming this bill becomes law, such amendments will be to the Prime Minister's Constitution and not to the one we have lived under for the past 114 years.

I would like to voice my objections to some of the specific items in the resolution, in the unhappy event that it should become the new Constitution of Canada. Commencing with the preamble, I would like to address myself to the motion put forward on behalf of my party by the hon. member for Provencher (Mr. Epp). I cannot understand how anyone could object to this motion. It is basic and fundamental to the founding principles of our nation. Our motion reads:

Affirming that the Canadian nation is founded upon principles that acknowledge the supremacy of God, the dignity and worth of the human person and the position of the family in a society of free individuals and free institutions.

● (1510)

In his statement before the joint Senate-House of Commons committee on the Constitution, the hon. member for Provencher went on to say:

—affirming also that individuals and institutions remain free only when freedom is founded upon respect for moral and spiritual values and the rule of law.

I have on my desk some of the representations made to me on this subject by my constituents in Victoria-Haliburton. These are in response to a newspaper release that I sent out, in which I noted that the unholy alliance of the Liberals and NDP in this House rejected our motion. I might add that I have to date received not one piece of correspondence supporting the Liberal-NDP position, but I have received well over two thousand responses supporting the position of my party.

I have been a little surprised, but very pleased, that all of the mail I have received in response to the position I have taken on the issues of the supremacy of God, abortion, the right to own and hold property and capital punishment has supported my stand all the way. I feel that I am representing the views and convictions of the majority of my people.

On the question of abortion, I reject out of hand any motion that the expectant mother should be the sole arbiter as to whether she will or will not abort a foetus. That would be tantamount to giving pregnant women decision-making powers

that are rightly those of the courts and the medical profession. I am deeply disturbed as it is by reports that some courts have ruled that a foetus does not have the status of a person until it is delivered. I suggest that that is why some people want to specify in our charter of rights that only persons have rights.

It is an established fact that a foetus is a living thing, medically, morally and spiritually, and yet, if we are to accept recent court rulings on the subject, the foetus does not have any rights until it has been delivered. This raises the very serious question as to who is to speak for the foetus until it is delivered. It is we who must answer the question. It is our responsibility, and we must decide how best to protect the foetus until it is delivered and becomes a person under the law.

Abortion must not be allowed to become a political football. It is one of the most serious social and moral issues facing our society. But it is more than just that; it is a matter of life or death. I totally reject the concept of abortion on demand. To me, it is unthinkable. We must not accept abortion as just another method of birth control. Basic standards of moral conduct rule out abortion as a means of escaping the consequences of permissive and irresponsible lifestyles.

To return to the statement on Conservative Party policy, presented to the constitutional committee by my friend, the hon. member for Provencher, I draw the attention of the House to page 6 of his statement, wherein he states our policy with regard to right of ownership of property. This statement seeks to amend Section 7 of the resolution by substituting the following:

Everyone has the right of life, liberty, security of the person and the enjoyment of property and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with principles of natural justice.

I find it difficult to understand how anyone could quarrel with this statement of principle, especially in a country where the right to own and hold property has been a fundamental right since confederation.

Here again the Liberals and NDP joined forces to oppose this motion, but I was surprised and pleased some time ago to hear that the member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Orlikow) spoke out in support of this motion in his remarks in this House on the Constitution resolution. On page 8135 of *Hansard* for Wednesday, March 11, the member for Winnipeg North quoted from the fifth amendment to the American constitution. I quote the member as follows:

—no person shall be “deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law”.

The member for Winnipeg North might have completed the amendment by adding: “nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation”.

The point is that the member stated that this provision is in the resolution that we are debating, and that he supports it. I am pleased to have his support for the principle of our motion, but unfortunately the right to own property is not contained in the government's version of the resolution. However, I would like to take the member's words in *Hansard* literally and to hope that he will stand by his guns and insist that this provision be included in Section 7 of the resolution, as it now