

XI. In considering the amendment of the constitution certain matters should be kept in mind:

- (a) We have a constitution similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom in that parliament is sovereign. Depriving parliament of sovereignty would deprive our constitution of this principle.
- (b) It would be a retrograde step in that we would be returning to Westminster a power now enjoyed here. Perhaps we should first consider means to amend the constitution.

That is the end of that statement which, as I say, is an attempt at summarizing what I said the other day.

The CHAIRMAN: Now, are there any questions?

Mr. HANSELL: Mr. Chairman, I do not know whether the desire of the committee is to go back over all Mr. Varcoe's evidence, but I can see that we have a tremendous job on our hands if we are going to delineate and describe what the fundamental freedoms are. For instance, there are two points this morning in what Mr. Varcoe has read. One concerns the freedom of the press. I do not know that I would want to ask Mr. Varcoe this question, but I would suggest it to the committee. Is the press free to publish that which is wrong? Is the press free to publish that which is false?

Now, there is one thing. So far as the Alberta Press Act is concerned, so far as I can see it did not curtail the press. The only thing it did was to insist that the press make corrections when it was wrong.

There is another small point which requires some considerable thought. One phrase Mr. Varcoe used this morning was the legal right of an individual to work. Now, that could apply to the slave labour which is taking place in Europe to-day; that is the legal right to work. Even the phraseology must be watched very carefully. Instead of saying the legal right to work, why not say the legal right to income. After all work—I am segregating that point—work is only a method of achieving something else. It is the something else you want. The work is only a method of achieving freedom. Work is only a method of achieving a right. It may be achieved in some other way. Why not say the legal right to an income because that is the objective of work. Why not say, the legal right to leisure instead of work.

Taking a very long range view of that clause—I may be jumping off the deep end now—but taking a long range view of that clause, you could build up a slave state and call it a free state. I am only making these observations to indicate the tremendously intricate and careful study which would have to be made.

Mr. MICHAUD: Mr. Chairman, following the remarks of Mr. Hansell, I agree with most of what he says. I should like to have him clear up this point. I agree that there should be a right to an income, but should that be unqualified? For instance, you have an able-bodied man who is quite able to work. Is your conception to be interpreted as the right of this man to come to the government or a government agent and claim, as a matter of right without any conditions attached to it, the right to an income, to a livelihood, if the man is able to work and is unwilling to work?

Mr. HANSELL: Of course, Mr. Chairman, we might get into a quite complicated discussion and which might, at this time, be very much misunderstood. I do not think a person has a right to come to the government and say, "I have a right to a livelihood unconditionally". I would not say that. But supposing I should answer this way: there are certain fundamental citizenship inheritances which cannot be measured in dollars and cents which are the right of every citizen by birth and, therefore, those inheritances could not be measured in terms of dollars and cents.