

National Defence Act Amendment

a more subtle thing than the exercise of voting power. If a democracy is to work properly, surely there should be regard for the traditions, the feelings and the points of view of all segments which together make up a country, if that country is to hold together at all.

There are millions of people in this country—I know there are a great many in my constituency and I am sure there are many others like them—who feel so keenly about this erosion of things which they hold dear, that their ability to make the contribution they would like to make toward a united Canada is lessened. I believe this fact is very sad, especially if what is taking place is unnecessary. In much of what is being done here I see actions which appear to be based completely on prejudice. I think it is most unfortunate, because I believe prejudice is unnecessary and need not exist.

I have the highest respect for Canadians of all racial backgrounds, but the fact that they come from different racial backgrounds or from different parts of the country does not give them the right to force me to submerge any recognition I may have of my origin, or the traditions which I hold dear. This does not give them that right any more than it gives them the right to wipe out my religious thoughts.

In this connection I should like to quote briefly from Edmund Burke:

A nation is not an idea only of local extent and individual momentary aggregation, but it is an idea of continuity which extends in time as well as in numbers and in space.

People will not look forward to posterity, who never look backward to their ancestors.

In this particular clause we are whittling away at one of our traditions. I do not care what the minister thinks about "Royal" or whether the majority in this house think this word should be eliminated from the names of our services. If they think it should be removed, they at least should have the courtesy and the tolerance to realize there are millions of Canadians and, although I have no way of knowing what the percentage is, I believe there are many thousands of Canadians in the services, who are proud of this tradition.

The traditional appellation "Royal" was not given lightly to military units. It is something special. It is given in recognition of duties performed and standards achieved. The Royal Canadian Air Force was not always the Royal Canadian Air Force. It received this part of its appellation by achievement. Even if I were

one who approved of this unification, which I am not, I see no reason that in the process, by the back door, the government should take this opportunity to wipe out the designation "Royal" from all of our armed services. This has nothing to do with the efficiency of engines or the kind of electronic equipment which might be used; that is obvious.

I should like to ask the government to come clean, to put their cards on the table, and tell us what they are up to. What is the purpose? Do they think these traditions are divisive and bad because they happen to be associated with one ethnic group in this country, namely the Anglo-Saxons? Is that the reason? I do not agree with that reason. I do not think we should allow our traditions to be eroded or destroyed, regardless of their origin.

I am of Scottish origin. My ancestors fought against the constitutional authority of Britain almost as recently as the French Canadians did. I might say that for their pains they were treated much less kindly than were the ancestors of French Canadians. That, however, is aside from the point. I do not believe we should fall into the trap of judging conditions in the 20th century by the codes or ethics which existed in the 18th century. This of course is a means to stir up prejudices in the minds of those who either do not understand, or would stoop to compare the two situations. They are not comparable. I do plead with my colleagues who represent other parts of Canada to have regard for these things.

Mr. Churchill: Hear, hear.

Mr. MacLean (Queens): These things are held dear. What I am about to say, I say without any political implications, without any attempt to cast reflection on the government or anything of that sort; and although I am speaking only for myself, I know there are others in my constituency who feel the same way. I confess that in the last four years I have considered very seriously moving from Canada and becoming a citizen of another country because I believe, if this trend should continue, that this would be the best course to take, although a difficult one, in the best interests of my children and my children's children.

This is an indication of how deeply some of us feel about the things I have been speaking of. I am not surprised that people who come from other parts of the country and from other backgrounds perhaps do not appreciate this. All I ask that you do is look into it. I do not care what methods you employ in looking