

Interim Supply

which face this nation today is whether we are going to retain the kind of strong central government which the Fathers of Confederation planned when this country became a union of four nations, or four provinces, in 1867.

Mr. Regan: Mr. Chairman, would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Woolliams: I have hardly got started, but if you have a question I will try to answer it.

Mr. Regan: Am I to understand the hon. member is a supporter of the compact theory of confederation, which seemed to have been disposed of by the late Hon. Norman Rogers in the 1930's? Am I to further understand that the hon. member is suggesting that there were four nations which joined together in 1867? Is the hon. member not aware that the union between Ontario and Quebec preceded that event by some 25 years?

Mr. Woolliams: I do not intend to get into an argument about constitutional law with my good friend, but I am always very interested in his questions. I am sure if he listens to the address I have prepared he will understand what I feel should be taking place in reference to a strong central government in Ottawa. Perhaps I should answer his question in this way. I do not believe this nation can survive if we are to have ten balkan states. We cannot exist with the kind of loose network of federalism which has been perpetuated by this government.

The present government makes reference to co-operative federalism. I believe it was this party which actually coined that expression. Unfortunately coined words are used in different ways. This government is placing a different interpretation on that coined expression than was intended. The charge I make is that the Pearson government is Canada's assassin, and that you are all honorary pallbearers to this nation. I did not intend to get into that type of address immediately but did so because of the question the hon. member posed.

Canada is still a very young nation made up of people with many cultures and traditions. The population in western Canada, which is made up of people of many ethnic origins, feel very deeply about this fact. They realize that this nation was created by people who came to this land from all the countries of Europe and Asia with deep rooted hatred and prejudice toward one another. These prejudices, hatreds and animosities were the

result of European wars fought by their fathers and grandfathers. One could perhaps say that in Europe the Germans hated the French, the British disliked them both, while the Russians disliked all three.

These people came to Canada in search of a new nation and a new destiny with these prejudices, animosities and hatreds buried in their hearts and bosoms. They found, whether they settled in villages, towns or on farms, and whatever avocations the neighbours over the back fences had chosen, be they German, English, French or of another ethnic origin, they were the same kind of people. These people realized that the neighbours had different cultures, traditions and backgrounds, but they had also come to Canada in search of a new destiny, and that they were all friends after all.

The most important thing we must keep in mind in dealing with a nation is that these prejudices and animosities were buried long ago. I believe Canada was the first country to legislate in respect of freedom of religion. I think Canada did so even before Great Britain and other countries, who are looked upon as the mothers of liberty and freedom.

An hon. Member: Oh, oh.

Mr. Woolliams: Surely the hon. member is not going to take the position that the rules of law and tradition we inherited from the Anglo Saxon system are bad. I have always maintained that the rules of law we have in our democracy represent the kind of freedoms that all Canadians enjoy. We do enjoy these freedoms because of those rules of law. A very simple example can be found in the fact that our children can leave their homes, whether they be in Scarborough, Calgary or Montreal, travel to school and return home safely. That is the case not because of the efforts of any one province but because of the protection given to individuals by the rules of law against infringement by the state or other individuals.

Many people feel that Canada is a union of two nations. If they mean that this nation is a union of two great cultures and traditions I agree completely. If they mean that this nation is a union of two completely different states, then I cannot agree. It is now a union of ten provinces. Canada began as a union of four provinces, whether that union took place ten years or 25 years after a union between two provinces. The nation finally became a union of ten provinces.

That is the kind of country we have, but I say that if we are now to weaken the very fabric of confederation by taking away the