

The Constitution

moneys. He made the point as well that the federal government is not subject to Section 36 of the Combines Investigation Act which disallows statements which are misleading or false. He wrote at that time:

Why is it that our democracy has no protection against misleading advertising by government—no avenue to challenge government propaganda? Several weeks ago two newspapers closed, a hue and cry went out from politicians and journalists about the control of the press by two large chains. Almost immediately, a Royal commission was announced by cabinet.

Let me say as an aside it was to be under that great non-achiever, Tom Kent.

But which is the greater threat to our freedom, Mr. Speaker, the closure of a couple of newspapers or the freedom of government to mislead without any challenge? The hon. member for Provencher (Mr. Epp), who has done such an outstanding job during this constitutional debate, had this to say in the House on February 17, as reported at page 7388 of *Hansard*:

But I do not believe that there is any provision in this constitutional proposal which is more objectionable than the permanent enshrinement of a referendum to change Canada's Constitution. This is not just any referendum, it is not asking the people; it is a referendum which could be held in order to break a so-called deadlock, a deadlock wholly determined by the federal government. It is a referendum which will still be controlled by the federal government. It is a referendum which would be used to by-pass the people's elected representatives in provincial legislatures. It is a referendum which could be used by a majority to override the rights of minorities, the very essence which this proposal purports to protect.

When we realize that the government is by far the largest advertiser in this country, spending about \$2.50 per capita for this purpose, and when we consider that in the United States, a far richer country, the government ranks about twenty-eighth in terms of national advertisers, spending about 65 cents per capita, we can see the enormous importance referendum advertising provisions have; and this is why I so strongly support the concept put forward by the hon. member for Provencher. I would recommend it to other members of this House. We must have some sort of guarantee to control the government in this respect.

Many Canadians seem to have temporarily lost their capacity for moral outrage; we are a very complacent people, slow to anger, slow to become excited about social issues and abuses. Some of us, however, remain profoundly suspicious about the motives behind some changes being perpetrated in our country. The omission of any reference to the Deity and the absence of property rights do not compliment any Constitution. I trust members of the House will take cognizance of the amendments our party has proposed to the Constitution in the House and will recognize and rectify the mistakes which have been made.

It should be kept in mind as well that there are means other than the Constitution to change a country or shape its future. For example, while the government is commanding the attention of the nation with its ham-handed approach to constitutional matters, it is simultaneously dealing a blow to the destiny of the north and the Atlantic region by appropriating their hydrocarbon resources in a way that is clumsy, arrogant and unjust. While the government is whipping up public concern over the alleged crimes of the petroleum industry, its

alleged overcharging and gouging, it is interesting to me that our national petroleum company, PetroCan, is not very competitive, or at least does not seem to be, as I do not see it selling its products for any less than the "seven sisters" in the oil industry. That is a kind of anomaly. As Peter Brimelow pointed out recently in his column:

But the real cost to Canada of Ottawa's socialization of the oil industry is cultural, not economic. Calgary's oilmen were an unparalleled area of national self-confidence. They were making Canada's presence felt all over the world. And all by themselves, without legislation, they were beginning to over-shadow foreign investors by the same natural processes of economics that saw U.S. entrepreneurs grow past the foreign investors who built the American economy.

Now they seem fated to be sacrificed, like the merchants of the Maritimes, to a timid, defensive and ultimately mean-spirited centralism.

That is the tragedy of our country. We have not been allowed to develop uniformly all across this great nation. The government talks about federalism but practises centralism. That is what is holding our country back.

There are many other areas apart from constitutional reform where Canadians have reason to be concerned about their rights. Let us consider the McDonald commission inquiry into the RCMP. It is not so much a commission as it is an annuity. The "E Specials" of the force are today doing what they always did, some of which is necessary, but still without any legal definition, and this is four years later. The latest snag in its procedures I think will find a further interesting revelation. By its decision on January 27 last, the Supreme Court of Canada, in the case of *Franz Colet v. Her Majesty the Queen*, officially put to rest the ludicrous proposition advanced by Commissioner Simmonds that as long as their intentions were good the RCMP could break and enter with impunity. The learned judge in that case, Mr. Justice Ritchie, said very clearly that where police officers were acting without authority they were trespassers, and he thus reaffirmed the common law rights of ownership. But this government will not include the common law rights of ownership in the Constitution, which is a very, very serious omission indeed. I hope this House will see fit to rectify that omission, as I mentioned before.

● (1600)

There is another irony. While our national police force is subjected to a four-year inquisition, has anything been done about organized crime in this country except from the point of view of a few CBC programs and a couple of commissions, the Cliche commission and the Laycraft commission in Alberta, which touched on some of these matters? Not on your life. We politicians are investigating our police force and not doing a thing about organized crime.

In my judgment, constitutional reform is not necessarily any guarantee of sovereignty. True sovereignty means more than bringing home a statute, with or without changes. It means being able to exercise control over our country and defend our territory. Are we really able, without the help of our neighbour to the south, to protect ourselves even from hostile reconnaissance by long-range aircraft of the U.S.S.R.? Can we alone effectively patrol and exercise surveillance over one of the