

National Defence Act Amendment

● (3:30 p.m.)

Mr. Churchill: I may repeat the speech at a more appropriate time when I can catch the ear of those who are in the gallery. Perhaps I could get someone on the minister's staff to issue a release based on my speech. It is not very complimentary to the minister, and of course that is not the type of release that goes out to all the newspapers of the country. But it would be worth while if what the Liberal party is attempting to do to the country was made public knowledge right across Canada. It is trying to change so many of our habits, our traditions and so much of our valued history. That is exactly what this government is attempting to do, and clause 5 of the bill shows so clearly what is to be wiped out, ignored and forgotten.

[Translation]

Mr. Mongrain: Mr. Chairman, I shall take only one minute to salve the conscience of the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. Churchill) who, it seems to me, is overly concerned with the removal of the word "royal". I suggest he exaggerates when he says that the intention is to remove anything reminiscent of the British crown, just to Canadianize everything brutally.

I shall tell him, as the saying goes in my part of the country, that he is more catholic than the Pope, or that he is more royalist than the Queen. And I would like to prove it to him by quoting the words of Her Majesty the Queen of England, for whom, incidentally, I have much respect; those words are taken from the speech she made during her last visit to Canada. Here is the exact quotation from her speech:

The role of the constitutional monarchy is to represent the democratic state, to sanction lawful authority,

As far as I am concerned, the lawful authority is the elected government, the one in office.

—to ensure the legality of the methods—

That is what is voted by parliament.

—and to guarantee that the will of the people will be carried out. I strongly wish—

I am still quoting the Queen.

—that none of my people will know coercion. To be happy, the citizens of a country must live in a climate of confidence and affection.

And note what the Queen said:

But a dynamic state must not be afraid to rethink its political philosophy. There is nothing surprising in the fact that an agreement drafted a hundred years ago does not necessarily meet all the problems of this day.

The Queen herself said that.

[Mr. Churchill.]

[English]

Mr. Deachman: Mr. Chairman, just before clause 5 passes I should like to draw the attention of the committee to a remark made by the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre about the Minister of Veterans Affairs, namely, that the Minister of Veterans Affairs does not care about the traditions of Canada's fighting men. I would remind the hon. gentleman, although I think he knows it, that the Minister of Veterans Affairs was an officer in the R.C.A.F. during world war II, was shot down in battle and was a prisoner of war. Like the hon. gentleman opposite, he was a gallant gentleman and served his country well in battle. I think it is stretching the imagination to select this minister out of all others and say that he does not care about the traditions and past of the gallant men with whom he served. I do not think the hon. gentleman opposite would want that remark to stand on the record or would want to select this man, of all people in the House of Commons, and say that kind of thing about him. I give the hon. gentleman the opportunity to withdraw that statement from the record.

Mr. Churchill: I know all about the record of the Minister of Veterans Affairs, so what the hon. member has said is not news to me at all. I said nothing about the military record of the minister. I said that he fumbled and bumbled with regard to the Vimy Ridge recognition ceremonies in Europe and here in Canada. I leave that on the record and I put it on again. I will put it on a third time if the hon. member wants me to do so.

Mr. Alkenbrack: Mr. Chairman, I did not intend to re-enter the debate when I came into the chamber but I was impressed by the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre fighting a battle with respect to clause 5, and fighting it alone. I want the committee and the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre to know that he does not have to fight this battle alone. Another reason for my rising at this time was that in my humble contribution to this debate last Monday I made the statement, as reported at page 14987 of *Hansard* that this government, which is in a minority position in the house, was doing these things to our armed forces for no better reason than political expediency. I quote my words as they appear at page 14987 of *Hansard*.

One of these expedients is the removal of Anglo-Saxon traditions from our services.

That remark was followed by a one word interjection by the Minister of National Defence. I point out to the committee that the