

*National Centennial Act*

Now, Mr. Chairman, regardless of what we say, and facts can be twisted, this was a union of necessity. Lower Canada knew full well that if she were left to herself she would be absorbed by the United States. Quebec, as we know it today, would have been non-existent. Upper Canada, the present Ontario, knew quite well that if she did not enter this pact she, too, would be absorbed by that giant, the United States, that was growing up at that time. It was a case of necessity, so that these two peoples welded their swords into plowshares and started building a nation. That is why I believe the centennial of the birthday of the nation dates from there, unless I have misunderstood Canadian history. It was a case of either unite or perish. Every Canadian of today knows that, and we might as well face it.

Other peoples came into this country after 1867. Some came for economic reasons. I can name various racial groups that came to Canada for the simple reason that their homelands were overpopulated. They came here, where they found open spaces and opportunities. Others came in search of freedom like the race from which I descend—in search of the freedom which was denied them in their homeland. They found that freedom in Canada.

They came in here, not as hewers of wood or drawers of water. They felt they were coming in as equals, as partners in the building of this nation, and they so feel today. That applies to everyone, Mr. Chairman, to everyone in this house, and we have the descendants of many races in this chamber. These people who came were prepared to make maximum contributions to the development of one over-all Canadian culture. They are making those contributions today to a national culture embracing the best of all cultures.

It is natural for a nation such as ours, made up of so many peoples from different parts of the world, a nation that I believe is still in the process of uniting into something more solid and stronger, to go through the pains of birth. With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like to quote a few sentences from an address given by Mr. Justice Samuel Freedman, who is now a judge of the appellate court of Manitoba, to an audience in Toronto in 1959, at a time when he was chancellor of the University of Manitoba. This is what he said:

The two major groups and many smaller ones are learning the lesson of living together as Canadians.

This was as far back as 1959.

But there are still dangers to overcome. Sometimes extremists have encouraged group isolation and exclusiveness. Sometimes, on the other hand,

[Mr. Mandziuk.]

there have been demands for compulsory conformity to a fixed pattern. I believe, however, that provided there is only one political allegiance, namely to Canada, and that all groups participate as Canadians in its corporate national life, there is still room for secondary cultures as well.

There are various parts of this nation where certain people feel that they want to isolate themselves, to be exclusive. There are others who feel we should all conform to their pattern of life. But I believe that this learned judge, when he spoke to his Toronto audience, expressed himself more clearly than I could, in giving us a lesson in what we must do to overcome the difficulties we face today. Certainly there is considerable disagreement. We cannot all think alike. It is only in a communist dictatorship that people are compelled to think alike, but here we are free to think and speak as we please.

I am talking about these people who feel they are equal partners in the building of this nation. Originally they had to overcome prejudice. My father did, and so did I. We overcame the prejudice. They had other difficulties to overcome. They had to learn at least one official language and many of them today know both official languages. Those who wish to retain their mother tongue and teach it to their children do so on their own account, and they do not expect the state to pay for it.

According to the latest statistics there are over 5 million people in our country who are descended from neither French nor British stock. They have entered into every sphere of our national life, legislative, judicial and educational. Two of my daughters are teaching school in a strictly English speaking district in Winnipeg, and this district does not take any exception or objection to their name. They are building up the next Canadian generation. They are proud to be doing so, and I am proud of them.

These people also entered the industrial life, and when the call came to shoulder arms they answered that call. They felt Canada was worth fighting for, and many names that a lot of hon. members cannot pronounce are on the rows of crosses in the fields of France, in the fields of Asia, and in the fields of Africa. Why? Because they believed in Canada. They believed in what this Canada meant to them.

These people pray, and I believe I have a right to ask on their behalf, that they be not left behind in celebrating the hundredth anniversary of this great nation of ours. They wish to celebrate. They wish to take stock of what they have achieved and what they have contributed to this nation. They hope that