

The Address—Mr. Caouette

When British Columbia entered confederation in 1871, it accepted the terms and conditions laid down in the British North America Act. Under this act, the provinces had to assume certain responsibilities. A number of those responsibilities, especially those pertaining to education and to the development of natural resources, became more and more important.

However, the constitution has not merely imposed responsibilities upon provincial legislatures, but it has also specified their taxation rights in order to enable them to meet these costs. One of those rights which was supposed to be an exclusive power was direct taxation within the province.

The agreement accepted by the provinces when they joined confederation and gave up their indirect taxation powers representing four fifths of their income in return for a per capita income or fixed subsidies soon compelled them to use their exclusive powers of direct taxation within the province under section 92 of the B.N.A. Act. The exclusive use of income tax by the provinces was respected during the 50 years preceding the first world war.

Federal intrusion in this field, in 1917, was explained as a temporary measure to face an emergency. The recognition of the provinces' right to impose direct taxes was confirmed by Sir Thomas White, who was then federal minister of finance, when he said:

Income taxes come under provincial jurisdiction and are a form of taxation suited to provincial needs. I have not set any deadline for withdrawing from this field of taxation, but I suggest, and I should like this suggestion to be recorded in *Hansard*, that, at the end of the war, this tax measure be immediately reconsidered.

The emergency created by the second world war compelled the provinces to abandon their powers of taxation and Ottawa entered the field of estate taxes.

However, it has been understood that the provinces would recover their rights in peacetime.

In conclusion, the province of Quebec wants to recover its taxation powers and one of the main tasks, if not the foremost one, of a Creditiste government, will be to request that Ottawa withdraw from the taxation fields that are not within its jurisdiction, such as direct taxation on personal and corporate income, and estate duties.

These are the policies we will follow during this session, Mr. Speaker. These policies are highly different from those introduced in the speech from the throne. Those are the main remarks we want to make with regard to these measures that the government intends to pass during this session.

The fight will begin next week. We are open to agreement. We are ready to accept mutual understanding, yes, but we shall not agree, for instance, to diminish any province for the benefit of Ottawa. And if at that time we are threatened, as was done in certain quarters, with a general election so that the voters may express their views, I say that we are ready to go to the people and

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ask a public expression of opinion about what is going on in Ottawa at present.

• (3:40 p.m.)

[Text]

Mrs. Margaret Rideout (Westmorland): Mr. Speaker, it is traditional to congratulate the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne, but in addition to that I take great personal pleasure in complimenting both the hon. Member for St. John's West (Mr. Cashin) and the hon. Member for St. Maurice-Lafèche (Mr. Chrétien) on the exceptional high quality of speeches which they made.

I am sure that every Member who rises for the first time in this honourable assembly is moved, as I am moved, by a sense of the occasion. It is perhaps a comment on the real strength of our traditions and on the deeper character and meaning of the Commons that such an emotion should exist.

The occasion has a triple meaning to me. I am not only speaking here for the first time, but rising proudly as the first woman ever to have entered this chamber from the very old Province of New Brunswick, and I am sitting in that place so recently vacated by my husband. I hope that it may not be out of place to say that while I hope my efforts will honour the memory of the former Member for Westmorland and carry on his work, it is my intention to serve and represent my constituents in my own way and to the fullest degree of my competence.

May I through you, Mr. Speaker, thank all my fellow Members for the warm and thoughtful tributes paid last summer to my husband. May I also, Sir, thank you and my colleagues on both sides of the house for your warm welcome to me as a new Member.

In our part of the country where we take politics very seriously a Member is kept in close personal contact with all the issues which disturb constituents. I am learning this very quickly during my visits home. I sometimes wish that those who manage the affairs of the country at a higher level could always see these realities as intimately as private Members do.

The hon. Member for Renfrew South (Mr. Greene), whose constituency has many of the problems of my own area, has had the experience of being with me on some political excursions in my riding. He would agree, I am sure, that some of the high-flown abstractions occasionally heard in Ottawa generate little enthusiasm among some in my area who have real difficulty in achieving even a measure of the affluent life.