

*The Constitution*

invasion of provincial jurisdiction without consent. We have looked at the amending formula and found it to have a double fault, bypassing the provinces and bypassing the Senate, both assaults on the fundamental nature of this country which set out in its course, and I hope it can be made to continue, as a federal country with a parliamentary system of government.

What about equalization? That is another reason why I along with a great many other Canadians have very little trust in the author of this document. I think that underlies a great deal of it. He may not realize this. I have mentioned it already, and I feel it needs mentioning again because these warnings fall on deaf ears. In the west there is a deepseated and genuine long-standing mistrust of the present Prime Minister. My own distrust is perhaps more personal, but I know that many share my doubts.

I ask myself, for example, whether I am prepared to see the British North America Act patriated, if that is the word, and entrusted to a man who had the effrontery to state publicly, and without a blush or backward glance over his own past, as he did in Winnipeg not too long ago, that a country which has been through two world wars should be ashamed to send its constitution to a foreign country for amendment. What utter balderdash, he above all people uttering even one word about world wars. He is a great one to be talking.

I must also ask myself whether I am prepared to accept at face value the patriation and other formulae proposed by a man who as recently as 1965, before entering the government, wrote as he did in an article published that year, and I quote:

Our existing constitution . . . creates a country in which Quebec may call on the support of nine allies to protect provincial autonomy.

He goes on a couple of lines later:

And this is the constitution our innovators want to change.

That was written by the present Prime Minister and is published in English in a book entitled "Federalism and French Canadians", page 44. I again quote:

Their vision of the Canadian constitution mentioned in the mandate of the legislative assembly's constitutional committee—

He was writing a brief for them.

—must be interpreted as taking place over several generations.

That was written in 1965. It is at page 43. Is the present resolution his first step? Perhaps. Finally, and again I quote:

To my mind, this—

That is, a lack of consensus in Quebec.

—only goes to prove that we must not meddle with the constitution yet.

True, he was talking from no position of power in 1965. He continues at page 43:

The real danger is that all these constitutional debates will provide an escape valve for our energies, and useful diversionary tactics for those who fear the profound social reforms advocated by the progressive element in our provinces.

I am also concerned when I think of these proposals to confide Canada's constitutional future to someone who was either unprepared, when western civilization including Canada was being threatened by the Nazi tide, or unwilling to go out

and defend it, but not ashamed to have others defend it for him.

**Mr. Pepin:** You said that once already. Why are you repeating it?

**Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich):** No, I did not say that. Moreover, he did his utmost to persuade his fellow Canadians to join him in abstaining from that defence.

**Mr. Cousineau:** How is it possible that you have so much hatred in your heart?

**Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich):** I also wonder whether I can see my way clear to entrusting my country's constitution to someone who, upon becoming Prime Minister, proceeded almost immediately by pushing through a change in the rules to emasculate this House and Parliament and reduce the role of parliamentarians to total ineffectiveness, calling them nobodies once they are 100 yards away from the Hill. I also wonder whether I can put my country's constitution into the hands of a man who did his utmost to get Canada out of NATO and who, when that failed, allowed our armed strength to dwindle from 100,000 to 80,000, a reduction of 20 per cent and, even then in a cunning way, deprived those forces of updated equipment until, as a last resort, all major items had to be ordered at once at tremendous cost. Is that the sort of a man to whom I want to entrust the constitution? My answer is no.

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I am not even sure that I want to see my country's future determined by a man who so diluted and dispirited the public service, in which I served with pride up to a point, by riding roughshod over the merit principle, by the appointment of such favourites as Pitfield and Head, that those who remain either feel filleted or are hopelessly beholden to him and his form of government for the preferment and emoluments with which he has bought their allegiance.

I wonder also about the matter of overlooking 12 Liberal years of federal fiscal fecklessness which saw increases in annual budgets from \$12 billion to over \$50 billion while deficits have climbed from less than \$1 billion to over \$15 billion. I say fervently: from men such as this may God soon deliver us.

Or again, are we ready to trust the ideas of a man who in 12 years has driven the national debt from \$16.7 billion to \$53.8 billion on which total public debt charges have increased from about \$34 per head of population to over \$200? Not necessarily to cap it all, but very nearly, I am not sure I am prepared to see my country moulded by a man who is ready enough to pay \$38 a barrel to the Arab and Latin American producers, but begrudges his fellow Canadians an increase beyond \$16.75 a barrel. That is a sad, sad litany. It is not a record to inspire confidence in one who aspires to create the constitutional strait-jacket by which we would be bound for the next century.

After all this I am moved to wonder why he is proceeding in this way when other less confrontational avenues are open, and I have shown where those avenues lie. Those avenues are there