

of me I cannot understand why the Prime Minister is forcing the British in this way. Why does he want to make enemies outside the country? He has enough of them right here at home!

The amending formula is a perfect example. Back in 1867 when the British North America Act came into being and this country was born, the Fathers of Confederation decided that this country would be a federal state. Two levels of government were established and each had responsibility and authority over those matters falling within specific spheres of jurisdiction. It has been a working relationship which has served this country well for 114 years.

What the government now proposes through its amending formula and referendum procedure is a dangerous move. It is a move which will do nothing more than continue to divide the nation and undermine the federal state system. It is a move taken by the government with the conscious knowledge that it pits region against region, province against province and minority against minority, all because one man wants his way.

There has been the suggestion that those members of the government who are uneasy and privately opposed to letting the Prime Minister have his way on the issue are keeping silent because of the "gold watch" syndrome. A departing employee is given a gold watch from his firm and fellow workers for his years of service. The Prime Minister's gold watch, it is said, will be the patriation of the Constitution and the charter of rights.

Mr. Ellis: A very expensive watch!

Mr. Darling: What my colleague says is quite right. I urge hon. members opposite to consider very carefully what they are doing. If this is what they are doing, they will have to face the fact that there will be no one in the country able to repair this watch when its mechanism falls apart, as it surely will. All the Prime Minister really deserves is a simple watch, probably a Timex. I would be only too happy to supply him with one, especially if it would hasten his retirement.

It has been said that humour lessens pain and that we only laugh when it hurts. Well, it hurts. It hurts me and many other Canadians to see this magnificent nation of ours in such turmoil. It hurts to see what is happening to Canada because of that impregnable barrier of indifference with which the Prime Minister surrounds himself. It hurts to witness the damage he is doing and to know what he wants to do to this once proud and growing land. We will no longer accept the pain, and the time has come to put an end to this headache.

The resolution we have before us must not be passed. It is riddled with injustice. What the government is proposing is destructive. It is time for all Members of Parliament to put their country ahead of party loyalty. We must remember that because of a willingness on the part of all Canadians to co-operate, to sacrifice and to work together for the well-being of the entire nation, Canada, in its short lifetime, has flourished. The Canadian people have not stopped caring; they still believe this country is worth caring for.

The Constitution

Canadians who realize how fortunate they are to be living in such a magnificent country care very much. The riches of this nation are not measured only in terms of forest products, oil, wheat, minerals and other products we use and export; the great wealth of this country also includes its human resources, people who take silent and undemonstrative pride in calling themselves Canadians. It once was fashionable to call such people the silent majority. Well, that silence is being broken. The people who care are now making themselves heard.

The voices of a great many people in this country are being raised in anger about the fact that the government is setting in motion changes to the fundamental structure of this nation which will have grave consequences for the future. There is anger at the fact that such changes are being implemented with complete disregard for the will of the majority.

There is anger that such changes bypass and ignore many concepts Canadians deem important to what may be termed the Canadian identity. The Canadian identity is not as elusive as many people may think. We know what it means to be a Canadian. It means we are part of a nation of free and proud people who treasure that freedom and pride and who work not only to maintain but to assist others less fortunate in the world. It means we are part of a community of nations, the Commonwealth, whose head is Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth the Second.

● (1630)

Recognition and acceptance of the monarchy is not a threat to Canada's freedom or pride. The monarchy serves only to enhance both. The monarchy does not imply a subservient role. The monarchy only serves to reinforce our position of prominence and stature in a community of nations. The monarchy does not seek to intrude; the monarchy only seeks to provide a link for the common good.

Over the years, the Liberal government has attempted, bit by bit, to erode that link. The Liberal government seeks to establish a Liberal identity in place of a Canadian identity. The present resolution before us makes it quite clear. The monarchy is important to Canada and Canadians understand this. Canadians are also beginning to understand that the Liberal government, through its proposed charter of rights, is removing control over certain legislation from the people's elected representatives.

I will speak now about the issues of capital punishment and abortion. This party proposed that there be included in the charter of rights a new section which would ensure that no provision of the charter would be used by a court to determine the issues of capital punishment and abortion, and that Parliament be allowed to legislate with respect to these delicate issues. The resolution before us offers no such safeguard.

These are two issues the fate of which must be decided by the people through their elected representatives. They are moral issues which cannot, and must not, be decided by the courts. By shifting the responsibility to the courts, this government seeks to avoid dealing with matters under its jurisdiction