

The Address—Mr. MacLean

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacLean: I would like to hear the federal government say that if the people in the Maritime provinces, in British Columbia or in Quebec decide by democratic means that the vast majority want to secede from Confederation, they have every right to do so.

● (4:40 p.m.)

I am not a separatist of any kind. I think such a course would be unwise. But I would be the first to defend the right of any area of Canada to secede from Confederation if it believed it was in its own interest. By the ambiguous actions of central government we have led people to believe—unjustly, I think—that they are compelled to remain in Confederation. That is not the case. We have been ambiguous in many other realms and fields, and it is no wonder we find ourselves in a crisis.

We have, as reflected by the government in any case, equated freedom of speech with the right of anarchists to appear on our nationally-owned radio and television network and, at the public's expense, pour their venom into the minds of people—this venom ticketed with the respectability of our national network. We have subsidized anarchists through organizations such as the CYC and the Canada Council. We have taxed our people to a shocking degree. This year every Canadian, every man woman and child, will on the average have to fork out \$656. A family of six gives over \$3,600 just to pay for the federal government, not to mention provincial and municipal governments. In this set of circumstances we almost become employees of the state because we have to devote so much of our time to trying to pay our taxes.

In this environment, usually both parents have to work to get their children through school and to pay for their higher education. With great sacrifice and great endeavour, these young people who have been deprived of a proper home environment are sent off to university to sit at the feet of revolutionaries, dedicated in some cases to the destruction of our civilization. We have allowed these people to infiltrate our universities in the name of academic freedom.

Some hon. Members: Shame!

Mr. MacLean: This, in my humble opinion, is lunacy. This government has downgraded our national symbols. It has done away with many of the traditions of our armed services, those services that we now have to call upon. It has struck from the masthead of our national flag the symbol of Christianity, I suppose because that is old-fashioned. We have scorned law and order in the name of free speech. The freedom to do our own thing has been talked about a great deal. Mr. Speaker, what is the freedom to do our own thing? The freedom to do our own thing, to do as we damn well please, is the freedom of the jungle—nothing more and nothing less.

I believe that the government over the last few years has shown a kind of schizophrenic attitude toward the responsibilities of leadership. I believe this is because it has two factions within it, one gaining ascendancy at one

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time and the other at another time. But I hope the faction within the government that will gain ascendancy in the future is the faction which believes in some of the principles that we hold dearest, that most Canadians hold dear, and I hope that in the future we will be more careful of our heritage. Some may say, "Oh, heritage; that is old-fashioned. What we need is a brave new world." To me, Mr. Speaker, a country that scorns and forgets its heritage is like a man who has lost his memory.

There is no magic that will preserve our way of life. We have to do it ourselves. We must recognize that the very ethic we live by is in the final analysis determined, preserved and protected only by the sense of decency of the people who happen to be its temporary custodians. For example, there is no point administering an oath of loyalty or oath of office to someone to whom it means nothing. There is no means by which extraordinarily destructive power could be withheld from a government that desired more power than it needed. I do not mean this as criticism of the government in the present situation, but we should recognize that when a government becomes a government, it is all-powerful. Nothing assures the future of what we consider to be our way of life except the willingness of members of the government to carry on that way of life.

Mr. Ross Whicher (Bruce): Mr. Speaker, it is not my intention to speak at length today. Before dealing with the one subject on which I intend to speak, I want to compliment the member who moved the motion for the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. We must not forget, Mr. Speaker, that he is a member of the government rump in this House. While there are not too many of us here this afternoon, we feel that periodically we hold the balance of power in this House and therefore we are very proud that a backbencher should have been chosen to move the Address in Reply.

I would tell some of my hon. friends to my left, who may not know him as well as the rest of us, that he is one of the most completely bilingual men in the House of Commons. His French and his English are perfect. He also speaks another language. I think a man like the hon. member should be congratulated for the fine job he did in moving the Address in Reply, and also for the fine job he does as a member of this House in representing the great constituency of Bourassa.

I would also like to compliment the member who seconded the Address in Reply, the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Douglas). From all sides of the House we hear a lot about the poor western farmers. It would surprise some hon. members to my left to hear some of the things told to us by that hon. member in caucus, when he talks about the wheat farmers and the dire straits in which they find themselves. As a result of this, the Canadian Wheat Board and the minister responsible for selling wheat have pulled up their socks and wheat is now being sold in great quantities. To the hon. member for Assiniboia, my congratulations.

This afternoon I wish to speak about a subject that is somewhat local to my riding. However, I feel that many