

*Newfoundland*

method of changing the Canadian constitution, the British North America Act. It seems to me that there is a considerable amount of confusion in the minds of certain members of the Liberal party and the C.C.F. party in this respect. They choose to disregard a vital fact in the situation as a result of which they go astray, either deliberately or by accident.

The present B.N.A. Act is admirably workable by men of good will. That has been discovered by the Social Credit party in its administration of the province of Alberta over a period of fourteen years. Men of good will in both the federal and provincial governments can make the British North America Act of today work successfully in the interests of Canada. There is no need to bring the British North America Act up to date. It is up to date. All that is necessary is to bring the thinking of the men of our country up to date, and to bring the application of the British North America Act up to date. Let the federal parliament exercise its powers concerning currency, credit, and banking wisely and beneficently for the advantage of all Canadians. As all hon. members will recall, those powers were given specifically to the federal government in the British North America Act. Let the federal government exercise them.

I notice a stone wall of determined resistance on the part of many members of the Liberal party against any progressive consideration whatsoever of those two powers. In the B.N.A. Act the dominion government is given power over currency and coinage, over banking, the incorporation of banks and the issue of paper money. I maintain that, if those two powers are exercised wisely by the federal government, all the unhappiness that has existed as between the dominion and the provinces during the past twenty years will have no reason for recurring. Let the federal government pass enabling legislation, as the present government has been doing recently. Let the federal government render available to the provinces the financial means they require to enable them to discharge their responsibilities under the constitution, and there will be no more difficulty.

Let it be borne in mind that at the present time under the constitution of Canada the provinces are charged with responsibility in all matters pertaining to education, health, roads, housing, the support of the unfortunate such as the unemployed, invalids, the aged, the blind and other people who are more or less unable to take care of themselves. It seems to me moreover that any broad interpretation of the principle of property and civil rights must include responsibility over prices and markets within the province also. I do not see how any province can possibly take

care of the property and civil rights of its citizens unless that province is able to control prices and markets. How can you guarantee the property and civil rights of a farmer if you have no control over the prices of the things he sells or the prices of the things he buys? That seems to me to very definitely carry the implication that the provinces should have power to control those two important factors in its life. Let the dominion government render available to the province of Nova Scotia, for example, the financial support necessary to enable that province to discharge its responsibilities in connection with property and civil rights, which I have just indicated. Then the dominion will have no further trouble with Nova Scotia or any other province, and the people of Canada will be happy and prosperous.

It will be said immediately by those who are orthodox in their financial thinking, "Well, where are we going to get the money?" That is exactly the matter I referred to when I mentioned the powers given the dominion government in respect of banking, currency and credit, and the issue of paper money. If in addition to the things I have already mentioned the federal government will give wise leadership to the provinces, which in considerable degree the present government has been doing within the last few years, a great many difficulties will be avoided. Call a dominion-provincial conference to deal with all the important matters for which the provinces and the dominion are jointly responsible. Then, after policy has been determined, let the federal government lead out, as it was set to do, and we shall have no more trouble in the dominion. All will then go well in Canada.

Listening to people, watching the way they applaud, listening to the little remarks they make on the side, we find that those in this house fall naturally into two groups. One group is the centralizers; the other group consists of the decentralizers. The centralizers seem to be afflicted with the idea that anyone who is not in this federal government or in this house has no sense and knows nothing about how to govern a province. In other words, they believe that in order to rule the people of British Columbia for instance we have to tell them what to do and see that they do it, instead of leaving it to British Columbia itself. That conception is entirely contrary to the facts. There are just as intelligent men elected to the government of British Columbia as ever came to this house; and they are close to the people and know the problems of the people. They are just as anxious to do what is right. All you need do from the standpoint of this government is provide them with the finan-

[Mr. Blackmore.]