

Newfoundland

Mr. Drew: —indicating the necessity of recognizing the importance of that constitution; and I am pointing out now that the debate which has been going on in this house has related to constitutional procedure, that we have already dealt with the principle involved, and that this is not what is now before us. We have stated our position clearly. We have made it plain that there is a way to deal with this matter which does not violate the constitution.

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Drew: We want to welcome Newfoundland into Canada on terms that will preserve harmony, good will and unity in the coming years. We do not want them coming in by the back door; we want them coming through the front door as friends welcomed into the Canadian family.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I wish to make it clear that, recognizing the importance of the principle involved, and insisting that the constitution be respected, it is our intention to vote against this improper procedure which is now before us.

Mr. M. J. Coldwell (Rosetown-Biggarr): Mr. Speaker, I was hoping that the remarks of the right hon. member for Glengarry (Mr. Mackenzie King) would conclude the debate on a high tone and with unanimity; but I regret that we have now had a discussion, entirely out of order, dealing with matters which were voted upon and disposed of last evening. You know, there are some people who think of constitutions when it suits their convenience. There are constitutions that govern the relationships of the various parts of a country; there are constitutions that govern bodies of men and women elected to public office. We have in this house a constitution which lays down certain rules of procedure; and if we are going to respect constitutions generally I think all of us should set an example by observing the constitution of this house; for example is much better than precept.

In the debate last night we disposed of certain aspects of the constitution. When the hon. leader of the opposition was speaking, I was tempted to have something further to say about the attitude of the early fathers of confederation, and particularly Sir John A. Macdonald. Since that is not permitted by the rules of the house, I am not going to do so. I am not going to repeat what I said before about the entry of Newfoundland into confederation. It is a great event in our Canadian history. As the right hon. member for Glengarry (Mr. Mackenzie King) said a few moments ago in a few well chosen words, it rounds out this great confederation.

One hundred and twenty-five years ago we were a few scattered colonies in British North

America; today we are united, and I hope permanently united, people. We are not stretched in scattered communities across this continent, but welded together as a great, powerful, influential and prosperous nation. If we are going to preserve that nation, there are in relation to our constitution some matters that we should be considering at the present time. During the course of this debate, we have heard so much about the constitution. We like to think our constitution preserves freedom of speech. I am afraid that, in some parts of Canada today, freedom of speech has been threatened from time to time.

Equally important with some of the aspects of the constitution that have been discussed within the last few days is freedom of worship according to the dictates of one's conscience; freedom to associate in our religious organizations; freedom to express ourselves through press and radio. At this time I mention those three particularly because I have been reading the newspapers. I have read that the allies of my hon. friends of the Conservative party are undermining all three of those freedoms. Only this morning I read in my hon. friends' newspaper, the *Montreal Gazette*, that the leader of L'Union Nationale, Mr. Duplessis, in the province of Quebec had advised retail merchants to exert pressure upon the newspapers to prevent a certain kind of publicity in that province. I say, Mr. Speaker, that that kind of thing reinforces what the leader of the opposition said in 1936, that there was a growing fascism in the province of Quebec. This undermining is done by the ally of my hon. friends.

If we are going to guard the great heritage given to us by the fathers of confederation, we have to have the right to promote the development of our individual cultures. I do not think there is anyone in this house who would gainsay the fact that at the very root—

An hon. Member: You do not know.

Mr. Coldwell: Someone says I do not know; that might be said of some of the people about whom I am talking this afternoon. There is no one in this house who should fail to recognize that the very foundation of this country lies upon the recognition of the right to divers cultures. We want to see that that right is adequately protected in our country's constitution. We want protection of the right to maintain those things given to the provinces under section 92 of the British North America Act; the right to maintain those social welfare services and responsibilities attached particularly to family life.

May I say, Mr. Speaker, that if we are going to build the kind of nation we wish Canada to be, then those problems that are of national importance can be dealt with