

of action he should follow as it is his responsibility to decide himself. He decided to go to the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission. He informed me of his decision, and I accepted it. I understood that it was the course of action he wanted to follow, and I supported him in his decision.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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RAILWAYS

IMPLEMENTATION OF HALL COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS RESPECTING CROWSNEST PASS RATE AGREEMENT

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina West): Madam Speaker, I have a couple of questions for the Right Hon. Prime Minister, to assist him and help his government in not fouling our Crowsnest—that is spelled f-o-u-l.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): —“ing”.

Mr. Benjamin: Mr. Justice Emmett Hall said that the Crow rate is essential to unity in the country. In view of the fact that his recommendations are widely supported by farmers, the government of Saskatchewan, and other farm organizations, would the Prime Minister now agree that the time has come to make a decision in support of implementing the Hall Commission recommendations on the Crowsnest Pass rate?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): The hon. member returns to the same kind of allegation which a fellow member of his party made the other day—that the people support a particular course. I answered the other day, and I repeat that I met a group called the Western Agricultural Conference, which represents many thousands of members, and they advised a contrary course. That is why, on this side of the House, the government is attempting to ascertain what seems to be so clear in the member's mind, which apparently is not even clear in the minds of the provincial governments out there, since some of them support re-opening the Crow rates, and others, particularly in Saskatchewan, support the contrary position. That is why the Minister of Transport, in particular, is busily engaged in trying to ascertain the sentiments of the people in the west.

Mr. Benjamin: This is one of the main reasons why there are no Liberals west of Winnipeg.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): You do have the NDP.

Mr. Benjamin: I mention that the dissension on the Crow rate comes from a minority, private interest commodity groups, including the Grain Exchange, James Richardson & Sons Limited, and Pioneer Grain Company, Limited.

An hon. Member: Lloyd Axworthy.

Oral Questions

Mr. Benjamin: I would ask the Prime Minister, in view of the fact that not only did Mr. Justice Hall hear briefs from over 1,400 people in 160 days, but a further survey held very recently of 1,200 prairie grain-producers showed the overwhelming majority said we should implement Mr. Justice Hall's—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member should be much briefer in his second question. I would ask him to co-operate with the Chair.

Mr. Benjamin: The WAC presentation is something less than Emmett Hall's recommendation. In view of the pandering that his minister and others have done to minority groups, will the Prime Minister, while considering WAC, implement the recommendations of Mr. Justice Emmett Hall instead and get the matter settled once and for all if he wants to really do something about unity in western Canada?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: I really find it difficult to accept the assertion of the hon. member that he is speaking collectively for the west, because I met two weeks ago with members of the Western Agricultural Conference. They represent many more members than the National Farmers Union with which I met yesterday and hold a contrary view. He knows that the Saskatchewan government holds one view and that the Manitoba and Alberta governments hold the contrary view.

If the hon. member is correct in saying that that is why we do not have more Liberals in the west, because we are trying to help the west arrive at a consensus on this, then what he is saying is that the NDP do have some members because they are playing to ambiguity, and are often sitting on the fence on this particular matter.

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● (1440)

[Translation]

THE CONSTITUTION

CONSEQUENCES OF ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Jean-Guy Dubois (Lotbinière): Madam Speaker, my question is for the hon. Minister of Justice. As it has been reported yesterday on the news and today in the newspapers that the Quebec justice minister has referred to a report by three lawyers to the effect that the resolution now before the House would affect several Quebec laws, I would like to ask the minister whether his department has conducted such studies in the past, even though according to the report, Quebec laws contained some inequities that might have to be corrected. Can the minister tell the House whether studies have been conducted in this regard and whether there are actually