

*Adjournment Debate*

latter part of February, and that is really when "high noon" is going to start to take a focus.

In the few seconds left to me, I would suggest to the government that it get its act in order. It must give some attention and priority to the economy so that Canadians from coast to coast appreciate, as we have up until now, our social programs, especially the medicare program, which as a benefit is part of our heritage. I am not going to get into that because I do not have the time for social charters, and I have some real questions as a lawyer about constitutionalizing social charters. But certainly in a pragmatic way we can accentuate the positive in this country from coast to coast. One of the positives has been our social net and our social programs for Canadians who cannot help themselves, and even for all Canadians to have the benefit of a medicare program which came in while I was a member. There were even members in the House then who thought there should not be a medical program. The then premier of Ontario, Premier Robarts, said they would never go ahead with it, and they did because members decided medicare was something for Canada.

I say in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that in coming to the finality of a constitution—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois):** Order, please. Your time is over.

[*Translation*]

The Hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Constitutional Affairs has two minutes.

**Mr. Jean-Guy Hudon (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister responsible for Constitutional Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I realize that my colleague has many questions. I probably cannot answer all his questions, but I know his concern about the referendum.

Mr. Speaker, it is here in this House of Commons that we will have to work to find a solution. The minister is certainly not ruling out any consultation procedure, as was stated in the Speech from the Throne. We promised to ensure that Canadians could take a more active part in constitutional development. The minister answered at the time that one of the ways that the government was still considering to fulfil its commitment made in the

Speech from the Throne was to hold a referendum, but the decision is far from being made.

• (1820)

My colleague mentioned the social charter and so on—the public consultations now going on open new horizons for us and suggest new approaches. A consultation was held in Montreal on the weekend as part of the five major constitutional conferences; another one will be held in Toronto next weekend and finally one in Vancouver. This was preceded by the Spicer commission which everyone has heard about. We did not hear only negative things during that commission—on the contrary. There was the Beaudoin-Edwards committee; now there is the Dobbie-Beaudoin committee. Mr. Speaker, all this will lead us to make a decision; it will not be decided in a referendum but here in the House of Commons.

Some Canadians have put us on notice. Bill Davis, Allan Blakeney and Maurice Sauvé have warned us against deciding on the method of consultation too quickly. I repeat what Maurice Sauvé said:

[*English*]

"Everywhere in this country people expect Parliament to come up with a solution. They want members of Parliament to assume their responsibility. It is yours. You are representing all of Canada, all of it. Nobody can replace you. You can have constituent assemblies. You can have all sorts of other forums. It is you who has the responsibility. Because of this you must come up with a package supported by everyone".

[*Translation*]

We must take action that will unify Canada and lead to reconciliation.

[*English*]

## TRADE

**Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley):** Mr. Speaker, I am rising tonight to follow up on a question I put to the Deputy Prime Minister back on October 3 on a very important issue, the softwood lumber tariff issue that has an impact on virtually all of Canada and the many communities throughout the country dependent on the forest industry. This question relates to the ongoing trade dispute with the United States over our softwood lumber exports to the U.S. and the American allegation that we unfairly subsidize our