

I understand much of what the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Jamieson) was saying, but there is far too much buck-passing in this country. When the economy is going down the drain and we are dividing much more than we should be, it is not very comforting to individual Canadians to be asked to look at other countries around the world. I remember, when I was in school, when everybody was flunking exams it was because they did not study for them. It was very cool comfort for me to go home to my father and tell him that I flunked my exam, but that that was all right because the other fellows did not study either; they all flunked.

We are the luckiest people in the world. Very often Canada reminds me of a company I had something to do with. I asked one of the members of the board of directors whether it was a good company, and he said, "Hell, Heward, it has survived 25 years of successive mismanagement". Let us not take comfort by saying that everybody is in the same boat with us. We are blessed with many things and we could be doing one heck of a lot better than we are. I hope those on the treasury benches will convince the Prime Minister that the time has come to let elected people from both sides of the House dialogue with their counterparts at the provincial level as we bring this new constitution to pass.

The Fathers of Confederation of 110 years ago would be the first to tell us in this House to get on with a big second step as they did in the United States. They did not freeze the Articles of Confederation in a museum, as we have done with the British North America Act. Are we up to this challenge? We had better be. Have we the will to preserve the union?

Let us stop talking about this referendum nonsense. The Prime Minister pulled this referendum idea out of a hat, and I am not convinced that we will ever have a referendum in the province of Quebec. I repeat for the second, third or fourth time, who in this House will admit that any kind of referendum, be it provincial or federal, can be an instrument to bring this union to an end? If we carry this kind of confrontation to its logical consequences, do we know what those consequences will be? Do I need to say?

Let us start talking common sense in this debate. I am not afraid to stand up—and I will say it in French and in English—and say that no province has the unilateral right to bring this union to an end. I would like to hear the Prime Minister say the same thing and forget about this referendum nonsense. I am very doubtful about the efficacy of referendums in the whole tradition of the parliamentary system, in the first place. I well remember 12 years ago when inside and outside this House I pleaded, not because of language and culture issues or because of the so-called Quebec issue but because of my experience in the four years between 1958 and 1962. I was appalled. If the average Canadian could come to Ottawa and see the waste, the buck-passing and the duplication—not of a few dollars but of billions of dollars, and not because of languages but because of our outmoded constitutional framework—he would surely push us to get on with the job. I had many extremely interesting conversations in those days, upstairs in the cafeteria, with the then new member for

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Mount Royal, now the Prime Minister, who had the ear of the then prime minister, Right Hon. Lester B. Pearson.

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As we debated those matters 12 years ago, I took the position that the time had come to draft a modern constitution, suited to modern times and made in Canada for Canadians by Canadians. It was good debate, although he did not agree with me for all kinds of reasons. First of all, there was the classic notion that any weakening of the federal authority would diminish the possibility of putting on paper the kind of plans he had for Canada. I did not agree with him. But what has happened in the past ten years is there for everybody to see; I am not going to make any partisan interjections about that.

About a year later, a man called Lévesque was driven from the Liberal party. He went to Toronto to make a speech, which I heard. He proposed what I thought was a modern outlook, a new federalism, when he said that if the then government and its successors stubbornly held on to the status quo, he would unfortunately be forced into another option. I am not going to be naive and say he was not going into that other option anyway. What I do say is that 12 years later a lot of people inside and outside Quebec deplore separatism and the separatist option. I do not want to use phrases like "cave in," "give in" and "back down", but unless we can be led by some statesmen who understand what the third option is, in terms of drafting a new constitution, this blind following of the status quo will drive more and more Canadians to accepting the separatist option.

Children who go to an ice-cream store for chocolate ice-cream are willing to accept a second option if the store does not have chocolate ice-cream. When we talk about the future of the country and the provinces, however, it is another thing. The blind faith underlining of status quo federalism cannot go on indefinitely without something cracking. I am not just talking to leaders of political parties, but to every member of parliament, of all political parties, when I ask if we have the guts, the muscle, the clairvoyance, the statesmanship to preserve this union. Are there enough statesmen with muscle, imagination and courage who are ready to go to work?

I do not think the next two years is going to be easy for the parliamentary committees. It is going to take a lot of guts, hard work and give and take. The Fathers of Confederation had fewer tools of convenience than we, but they had the guts, the muscle, and were forward-looking. In this House, most members are Canadians first and party people after. Let us go to work. We can do it, but time is fast running out. The hour for action and leadership in this great country has finally arrived. I do not think, sir, that time is on our side.

Hon. Iona Campagnolo (Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport)): Mr. Speaker, it is not seven years since the last public statement on sport. I am pleased that today, having tabled a green discussion paper toward a new national policy on amateur sport, hearings will be held across the nation on amateur sport so that it will be possible for people in every