

ernment's case has to collapse in substance. I come full course in the point I am trying to make.

If the Government of Canada had shown flexibility in the details of its arrangements with the other provinces, if it could adjust the time frame for Saskatchewan and British Columbia, if it could adjust the amount of money for Atlantic Canada—all of which flexibility makes immense sense—why could it not show the same flexibility to the province of Quebec? Similarly if you look at the substance of the proposal in terms of its economic impact, if the effect of the proposal is not simply to create jobs in Quebec but to create jobs all over Canada, I say: why in God's name could the Government of Canada not accept it for that reason?

I come inescapably to the conclusion, which I asserted earlier in my comments, that the only reason the federal Liberal party has not accepted the proposal made by the province of Quebec is that it happens to be the Parti Québécois. It happens to be a government for which the federal government has a pathological hatred and in which it can see no good whatsoever. I repeat to the Minister of Finance what I said earlier in French: I have not the slightest doubt that if the same proposal had been made by D'Arcy McKeough instead of by a man named Parizeau, the federal Liberals would have accepted it within five minutes.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Broadbent:** In concluding, I say in all seriousness that in my experience—and I have only been here ten years—this legislation is potentially the most harmful for federal-provincial relations that I have seen. It is coming at a time in our history which is particularly dangerous in terms of the unity of this country. I hope still that the pressure which has mounted within this country in the province of Quebec and beyond shows the unanimity among French and English-speaking Canadians in Quebec and out of Quebec in opposition to the federal Liberal leadership. This kind of united opposition could cause the federal Liberal leadership to think for once that perhaps they are wrong, that perhaps other Canadians have an insight into this measure which they do not have, that we too are good federalists, that Claude Ryan is a good federalist, that you can have a federalist in Quebec and a federalist outside of Quebec in this chamber, a federalist who is not a politician, who can say he differs with the Liberals, and yet is not a separatist.

● (1552)

If this virtually unanimous opinion in French-speaking and English-speaking Canada, apart from the federal cabinet, can have any impact, I hope that at least it will cause the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister—both of whom said yesterday at certain points that they would be prepared still to negotiate, be prepared still to think about some counter proposals coming from the province of Quebec—to act on that basic decent impulse. If they do reach the conclusion that what has been just for the other provinces is just for the province of Quebec as well, and that the essence of what Quebec is

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proposing in this instance coincides with the essence of this bill, perhaps we can get this matter resolved and go on with other more important matters, particularly matters of the economy that are of central concern to Canadians wherever they may live.

To this end, Mr. Speaker, and to give the government some time to think about this, I would like to move, seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles):

That all the words after the word "That" be deleted and that the following words be substituted therefor:

"Bill C-56 be not now read a second time, but that it be read a second time this day one month hence."

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, before you take note of the motion and put it to the House, since the hon. member said to me in his speech that he would allow me a question, I wish to direct one to him which might shed some light on his speech.

[*English*]

I would like, Mr. Speaker, to commend the hon. member for the very positive remarks he made when he stated that I have tried to do something novel and flexible. I would like to ask him two questions, with the consent of the House.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Does the House give its consent?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Chrétien:** How can the hon. member say that I am not flexible enough to Quebec when it was them that came to me with their proposition, 48 hours after the others had accepted the proposition that we agreed on? The second question I have for the hon. member is, how can he say that I am not flexible when, after receiving the proposition of Mr. Parizeau, I called my counterparts in the provinces and asked them if in their judgment I could accept the proposition put by Quebec, and they said no? How can the hon. member square that with a lack of flexibility?

**Mr. Broadbent:** I do not quite understand the second question.

**Mr. Chrétien:** The second question was, how can the hon. member say I am not flexible enough when, after receiving the proposition from Mr. Parizeau, I called some ministers of finance of the provinces that were part of the deal—

**Mr. Crosbie:** Some; some.

**Mr. Chrétien:** Some, yes. And I asked them whether I could accept the proposition of Mr. Parizeau. I called three ministers of finance and all three of them said that I could not accept the proposition because it would betray the agreement that was made among all of us.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Mr. Speaker, I would be very happy to answer both of those questions because, if I understand them correctly, rather than confirming the minister's own view that