

*Government Orders*

The government party in the discussions agreed to that principle but has not written it into this referendum. There has been some suggestion that there might be a declaration by the Prime Minister but that would not have the force of law.

I am very concerned that in our country, as wide as it is with so many different peoples in it, we should not allow for some of them having reason to feel that they have been trampled or steamrolled over.

This is true for the west, it is true for the Atlantic, it is true for Ontario but I am especially concerned for Quebec. I have only lived there for five years. I have lived most of my life in Ontario but two of my children have lived at least half their lives in Quebec and expect to live there for the rest of their lives.

It should not be forgotten that perhaps the most critical time for Canada's independence prior to the struggle we have over the trade agreements with the United States was back in 1776 when the rebels in the thirteen colonies thought they would easily liberate Quebec from Britain which had conquered it. The people of Quebec said no and they had good reason to say no.

There was an agreement that under Sir Guy Carleton, the governor, Quebec would have its own language, its own religion, its own civil law and generally speaking its own culture. In other words, though I do not think the term was used, Quebec should be a distinct society.

That was the deal. Quebec delivered on its side of the deal and therefore Canada was brought into being and we still have a country independent of the United States, more or less. There should not be any suggestion that the other parts of Canada wish to renege on that deal without which Canada would not have come into existence.

If, in this referendum, we seem to be rejecting the right of Quebec to a majority in control of the outcome of the referendum along with a majority for the Atlantic, a majority for Ontario—I am not particularly worried for Ontario—and a majority for the west which is very important to many of my friends in the west and especially for many of the aboriginal peoples who live in the western provinces and the Northwest Territories, there should be a majority for each of those regions.

Therefore, the referendum may not be seen as a victory of some regions over one or two other regions. They have to be recognized not just in the vote, the possible outcome, but in the way the structure of the referendum is to be interpreted.

The second matter which I wish to note is that 30 per cent of Canadians have had the experience of being designated as different, as being often ignored, because they are racially or ethnically distinct from the majority, particularly those who are racially distinct.

We thought we would never have a race riot in Canada. We had one in Toronto a couple of weeks ago. We saw the bitterness in Canada's major metropolitan cities between certain racial or ethnic minorities and the governments of those cities, including their police forces. The bitterness is something that has caused us all great concern and we should not appear to be overlooking those. Until this date the government has refused the request of those minorities to include in its proposals, or to agree in its proposals, an amendment to section 27, the multiculturalism section.

Those groups representing the 30 per cent have asked that we should add that the section requires also the promotion of racial and ethnic equality. Without that, that being denied as it has been until this day, the people of this 30 per cent are not at all sure they are being included as equals if we will not guarantee it in our charter.

Therefore I would hope before the question is worded there will be some consideration given to that 30 per cent of the people of Canada.

The final matter I am concerned with, and it has been spoken to by some of my colleagues, is there must be effective equality in principle in the funding arrangements. There are only going to be two sides, yes and no. There may be many opinions on the yes side, many opinions on the no side, variations of yes or no, but it comes down to putting your "x" in one box or in the other.

If the rich are allowed to use all the force of their dollars on one side of this equation it will be a sick joke and it will be seen as a sick joke by the large majority of the people of Canada. It would be divisive to allow the rich to buy this referendum according to whichever side suits it.