

Minister told the partisan gathering of the Ontario Liberal Association the following:

The west demands a new deal from confederation and the federal government must help bring it about—I believe that for Ontarians to say no to the aspirations of the west today would be to say no to your own tomorrow.

● (1430)

Is it okay for the Prime Minister to ignore the west but not okay for Ontario? Again he can be seen as going directly against his own advice, for he is not paying attention to the aspirations of the west by moving unilaterally.

Then there are his compatriots in Quebec, the Liberal party of Quebec, headed by Claude Ryan. Does Mr. Ryan agree with the Prime Minister's unilateral action? Does the party agree with the Prime Minister? Obviously the answer is no. The message of Mr. Ryan's beige paper states that the essence of Canada is federalism.

Then we come to the leader of the New Democratic Party, the hon. member for Oshawa. Even he realizes the dangers of unilateral action. He stated on the opening day of debate on this resolution that the way the Constitution is changed is almost as important as the substance. He said: "We could have a situation of grave danger."

What caused him to change his mind? Perhaps he agrees with the Prime Minister that Canada should not be a federation, that all decisions should be made in Ottawa and that the provinces should serve no real purpose. Perhaps he agrees with the Prime Minister that Canada should instead be a republic and not a federation, as was indicated by the Prime Minister's remarks on November 23, 1979 when he stated that a republic might be better for Canada.

Is this the ultimate goal of the Prime Minister, the transformation of Canada into a republic? Is unilateral action merely the tool that will wipe the provincial governments off the face of the map? Many members opposite would say it is not so. They would tell us to read the words of Liberals in this House the day after the referendum.

I recall all too well the emotional rhetoric, the calls for reform, change, co-operation and consensus. What has happened since? The Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacGuigan) said as far back as October 21, 1977 that "fuller consultation by the federal government" is needed. He said the areas of the country must be made to feel that they are being consulted. Where is the greater consultation? Does he call a week in September greater consultation?

I return to the day after the Quebec referendum when the Prime Minister said:

What we must do is chart a new course and agree upon a common itinerary toward that common destination.

Is the July 1 deadline a common itinerary? Is this amending formula, this charter, this referendum, the common destination? He continued:

We shall constantly need the support of the Canadian people.

Where is the support? He does not have the support. He went on to say:

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We are also counting on the support of all provincial governments, including that of Quebec. We shall all have to agree on the basic principles underlying our efforts. We have to be receptive to the needs and aspirations of all Canadians to stick together.

Those are his words, "to stick together". Has he lost the glue? If so, I would like to help him out. I have my own special brand of patriation glue. It will adhere to simple patriation, it will hold fast to equalization, it will bond permanently to an agreed upon amending formula. But it has a word of caution on it. It says "Danger; not to be used with unilateral action". Glue will fail to keep nations stuck together if used unilaterally.

Maybe my glue is not so good after all. I doubt that there is a glue that will work on this model we are debating here today. I cannot help but ask, where are all these words of the Prime Minister now? What happened to "aspirations of all Canadians" and "stick together" and "we all have to agree"? Perhaps those were just words to the wind and nothing more.

Then we have the words of the Minister of Justice on that same clear day in May when things looked so bright. What did he say? "But Canada is a federation." Those were his words. He also said: "We must consult the provinces." He consulted but he would not limit the area of consensus. He had the charter of rights in his hand, but in the words of the Prime Minister the charter was non-negotiable. Therefore, if the provinces did not agree with Ottawa, that was too bad for the provinces. That is the Liberal brand of consensus, the Liberal brand of federalism.

Let us take a closer look at that non-negotiable item. When we look at this charter, we must remember who it is for. It is for my friends in Vancouver, Prince Edward Island, Yellowknife and Peace River. Does this charter speak for them? Does it graciously grant them rights they do not already have? Does it make them the masters of government and not the servant? This government wants them to believe that it does these things, but I and the people of Peace River know that they have this right. They know they are not the government's for the giving. This government chooses to pretend that we are the slaves who must submit to their whim.

I and the people of Peace River have no objection to an entrenched charter of rights. What we object to is the means by which this charter is to become entrenched. We do not want this or any charter entrenched if it means sacrifice of the fundamental principle of federalism. On October 17, 1977, as recorded at page 36 of *Hansard*, the Prime Minister said that the people of western Canada—

—feel that they are not given enough opportunity to participate in setting up a national policy. They feel they are too remote from the central government in Ottawa, and left out of the centre of decisions.

The unilateral entrenchment of this charter is a typical example of what the Prime Minister referred to in that statement. Therefore, I and the people of Peace River country object to this charter. We object to the state being master, graciously granting the rights to the people who are therefore the servant. If the people say to the state that they do not want the state's charter or unilateral action, then the state must not and cannot follow through against the will of the people.