

The Address—Mr. J. Clark

ment has acquired, often without the protection and the standards guaranteed by the Public Service Commission.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, it is bad enough that a government in mid-mandate, elected with a solid majority, should use a throne speech to mislead instead of lead. But that is particularly damaging for this government because Canadians have come to expect that this is a government which cannot be believed. Its history has been marked not simply by changes but by absolute reversals.

In 1974 the Prime Minister campaigned against the very idea of controls. We can remember him pointing his finger on the television screen saying, "zap, you are frozen", and then a year later he imposed what he had opposed. On May 10 he told the trilateral commission that, "to me that is the end of separatism"; and ten days ago in Toronto he said, "But now, perhaps, an increasing number of French Canadians think they do have somewhere to go. And there is a legal political party which for a variety of reasons is getting a large percentage of the vote in Quebec."

This throne speech tip-toes toward greater freedom of information; yet the government still hides the secret reports on post controls prepared by the ten deputy ministers, the group known as the DM ten. The speech again says controls will come off, but then it goes on to propose to negotiate their extension with the provinces. In all of this there is one clear message, which is that no amount of flim-flam can obscure the fact that this is a government that Canadians cannot trust.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: And without trust it is a government that cannot govern, because a basis of trust in a federal and diverse country like Canada is elemental to national unity.

I want to speak for a moment about national unity because I think there has been a mistake in assuming that bilingualism, important as that is, is the only implement or the only issue of national unity in Canada.

[*Translation*]

Due to the agreement given by all parties in this House, bilingualism has become law and it will remain a basic principle of any Progressive Conservative government which is assured of receiving then as it does now the support of the minority parties in this House. However, the manner in which bilingualism has been implemented has caused some concern among many Canadians, French-speaking as well as English-speaking, but there is no reason to call them bigots or racists. On the contrary, what they need is to consider calmly various injustices now existing in the public service or elsewhere so that the program will be efficient in terms of the law and will be accepted in practice. This is our party's commitment.

[*English*]

Constitutions are important; laws are important. But this country is more than laws, more than constitutions; it is above all a partnership, and the essence of partnership in this country

[Mr. Clark.]

is to establish a basis of mutual respect and trust. That has broken down in Canada. It is not an accident that it has broken down. It is not due to impersonal forces from abroad. It has broken down because of now nearly a decade of the practice by this government of taking unpredicted unilateral actions and unilateral decisions to withdraw from shared costs programs which previously were forced upon the provinces, of unilateral changes in the anti-inflation board controls after many of the people affected by those controls had just gone through the costly process of adjusting to the rules that had been there, and of unilateral imposition of the program of controls without any consultation with the Canadian Labour Congress or any of the other partners who were directly to be affected.

You cannot run a country unilaterally. You cannot run it on your own. The mistake the government has made, and which it seems intent on continuing to make, is that it alone is the government which can call all the shots in Canada. Of course we need in this nation a strong national government, but we also need in this nation strong provincial governments, a strong private sector, a strong labour movement, a strong agriculture, and a number of other partners who can work together to achieve the promise and the potential of this country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: What we have instead is an administration that is governed by surprise—changing the AIB regulations without warning, bringing in controls without warning, and depriving Canadians of the climate of certainty which they need to plan their own lives and to pursue their own goals free of the fear that the rules will change in the middle of the night.

[*Translation*]

The Speech from the Throne briefly referred to the formal constitutional independence of our country. I am sure all hon. members would agree to the patriation of the constitution. However, we must not forget that we are now dealing with two issues. One is purely symbolic: It is bringing back home the document; the other is essential: It implies an agreement on the amendment formula which would make the constitution workable. At a time when the provinces do not trust the federal government disagreement over the amendment formula is to be expected. We should all be aware of the danger that the relentless pursuit of the symbol may jeopardize the chances of an agreement about the amendment formula.

• (1540)

[*English*]

There appears to be some question about the accuracy or the nature of the interpretation of the stance of the Government of Canada on the constitutional questions by the hon. member for Winnipeg South (Mr. Richardson), the former minister of national defence. I presume that there were also other reasons for his resignation. I want to put that question aside, however, regarding the apparent reason for his resignation because one of the things that is most significant about the resignation which occurred this morning is that the hon. member for