

*Oral Questions*

be on Holy Monday, or Tuesday, at the very latest, that is to say, less than two weeks from now.

TRANSMISSION OF RESOLUTION TO UNITED KINGDOM  
PARLIAMENT

**Hon. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** I wonder if the Prime Minister could be a little more precise about what he means when he says that this matter would not be pressed on the parliament of the United Kingdom. Does that mean it would be sent over there but put on the backburner, or that it would not be sent until the Supreme Court had made its ruling?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Madam Speaker, I would be happy to empower our House leader to negotiate such things. What I had in mind would be that we would send it over in a very informal and low-key way—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Crosbie:** Not likely.

**An hon. Member:** By bicycle.

**An hon. Member:** By mail.

**Mr. Trudeau:**—or send it over with fanfare, if this would please leaders of the opposition. Whether they gave it first reading or not seems rather secondary. What I am saying on behalf of the government is that we would not press for its passage. Whatever way the combined opposition wants to interpret these words, I will accept that interpretation.

● (1440)

**Mr. Clark:** Would you resist its passage?

## SUBJECT MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION BY HOUSE LEADERS

**Hon. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Madam Speaker, my further supplementary question has to do with what we can discuss at a House leaders' meeting. I wonder if it could be understood that we could discuss the point which the Prime Minister has just now made concerning when the resolution is sent to Britain, whether it is sent over and left aside or whether it is kept here until after a Supreme Court ruling has been made.

Will we also be able to discuss at a House leaders' meeting arrangements for a further debate that will include the guaranteed right of further amendments, such as amendments entrenching aboriginal rights and improving the position with respect to women?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Madam Speaker, as far as our party is concerned, I could give an unequivocal answer yes to both of those questions. The first question is that it could be decided at what state, if any, the resolution would be reaching Britain.

The second would be that we would see it as very important to improve that resolution, at least with those amendments upon which all parties seem to be agreed, namely, the one concerning equality of men and women, and the other providing for an improvement, perhaps, on the amending formula with regard to aboriginal rights. I am not sure whether there is agreement on that. I think there is on a text between the New Democratic Party and our party. I am not sure where the Conservative Party stands on that.

My answer is yes, for a very simple reason, that all parties in this House believe we should have our Constitution, that it should have an amending formula, and all parties believe that our Constitution should have a charter of rights. The hon. member for Provencher has made that quite clear on behalf of his party. The leader of the New Democratic Party has said that he thought it was the best charter in the world. But we want this content. We did not know, we did not agree, if we could proceed legally the way we are. What I am proposing is that we obtain a judgment from the highest court in the land as to whether we are or whether we are not proceeding legally. If we are, then I suggest that settles the matter and the United Kingdom will act expeditiously.

That is the proposal I am making to the Leader of the Opposition and to the Leader of the New Democratic Party.

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

REQUEST FOR WITHDRAWAL OF CONSTITUTIONAL RESOLUTION  
AND REFERRAL TO SUPREME COURT

**Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East):** Madam Speaker, I would like to direct a supplementary question to the Right Hon. Prime Minister. In so doing, I cannot help but make the comment how sad it is to see the Dean of the House, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, having to stand up on behalf of his party and swallow himself whole.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

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

**Some hon. Members:** Shame!

**Mr. Clark:** Cosgrove is awake.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. McGrath:** If there is any shame, it is on that side of the House.

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

**Mr. McGrath:** In view of the fact that the Prime Minister cites part of the judgment of the Chief Justice of Manitoba in stating that he had only a hypothetical question in front of him, and the Prime Minister takes that as an enjoiner to us to get on and pass the resolution so it can get to the court—but I say to the Prime Minister, surely if he wants to eliminate the hypothesis—

**Mr. Lalonde:** Ask the question.