

Oral Questions

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, three were not two battles of Quebec, there were three. Apart from mine there was one in 1759 and one in 1760.

Mr. Clark: You did better in that period.

Mr. Baldwin: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. With regard to bringing the constitution back to Canada does the right hon. gentleman intend to go to Buckingham Palace by his little self and bring it back here or does he intend—

Mr. Paproski: Bring it back on a bicycle.

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should understand that when we talk about the patriation of the constitution it really does not mean putting statutes in a little satchel and bringing them back. If I can use layman's language it means to ask the United Kingdom to deprive itself of the right it has of making laws for Canada. This was done by the Statute of Westminster for the other Dominions. It was not done for Canada. All we want now is for the United Kingdom, through its proper parliamentary channels, to renounce that right. We think all Canadians would be happy if we put an end to this.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baldwin: I have one final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will the right hon. gentleman come to this House and make a statement telling us exactly what he intends to do so we will all have the information and be able to do something about it as well.

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, apparently the station to which the hon. member listened in Alberta did not carry the full story. It might be that if the hon. members wants me to do it right here I could just re-read what I said as recorded in *Hansard* of October 1974. If he would look it up he would see what I said then.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**INDIA—REASON FOR NEGOTIATING FOR RESUMPTION OF NUCLEAR ASSISTANCE AND SAFEGUARDS DEMANDED**

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question which is directed to the Prime Minister is based on the grave concern of thousands of Canadians that Canada through its export policy is willfully and knowingly contributing to the increasing likelihood of a world nuclear catastrophe. Given the fact that India has already exploded a nuclear device in direct contravention of an earlier agreement with Canada and further that India still refuses to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, what prompted the government to re-open negotiations with India for a resumption of nuclear assistance to that country.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Well, Mr. Speaker, the discussions going on with India are precisely to get India to accept the safeguards which we think are essential now that they have exploded an atomic device. We are not re-opening discussions with them. We are

[Mr. Trudeau.]

pursuing the discussion began with them after that explosion of some one and one-half to two years ago, after which we cut off technical aid to India. We said we would not resume it until we have reached a satisfactory conclusion. It is to that that the discussions are directed.

Miss MacDonald: Mr. Speaker, given the horrifying implications for disaster that these negotiations present and because of conflicting reports that have emanated from New Delhi as to the agreements reached over the weekend, will the Prime Minister say what understanding was arrived at and also what conditions Canada is demanding that India meet before nuclear assistance is resumed. Have we for instance made it a condition that India sign and ratify the nuclear non-proliferation treaty?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I have not read the reports of the discussions and negotiations which were going on in India last week and I believe over the weekend. I am sure the Secretary of State for External Affairs will answer when he is back in the House.

Miss MacDonald: Mr. Speaker, will the Prime Minister give this House the assurance today that the terms of any accord between Canada and India will be tabled in the House for debate before it is ratified.

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, this is not the parliamentary custom.

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THE CANADIAN CONSTITUTION**APPROVAL OF PARLIAMENT BEFORE ACTION TO BRING TO CANADA**

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I wish to put a question to the Prime Minister which perhaps is supplementary to the matter raised by the hon. member for Peace River. The Prime Minister is quoted as having said that if it is not possible to secure agreement at a federal-provincial conference to bring the constitution and its amending process fully under Canadian control there will be unilateral action by the federal government. In view of the fact that any proposal to amend the Canadian constitution is a very important matter and clearly within the jurisdiction of parliament as distinct from the government as such, will the Prime Minister undertake that before any action is sought in the United Kingdom on this issue Parliament as a whole will be fully consulted and its full approval sought.

● (1430)

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can give that undertaking. I would like to make a slight correction to the premise which is based perhaps on an erroneous report. I said we would give consideration to acting unilaterally. I quite agree with the hon. member that if that course has to be taken, it would have to be done of course by resolution of both chambers of parliament.