

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: That's a lie.

Mr. Trudeau:—in two areas, Madam Speaker—

An hon. Member: At least blush a little bit.

Mr. Trudeau:—more powers to the provinces in defining the role which they would play in any amending formula in the future. It gives more power to the provinces—

An hon. Member: Just tell the truth, Pierre.

Mr. Trudeau:—in giving them greater jurisdictional resources by having what they do not have now, the power to levy indirect taxes and the power to regulate interprovincial trade. So if there is any shift of power from one government to the other, Madam Speaker, in these two areas it is a shift to the provinces.

An hon. Member: Answer the question.

Mr. Trudeau: I am told to answer the question, Madam Speaker.

An hon. Member: Have you sought a meeting?

Mr. Trudeau: The Leader of the Opposition, in asking his question, made the assertion that there was a shift of power from the provinces. I fail to see how the opposite side lets the Leader of the Opposition make allegations before posing his question but would not let me answer those allegations before the question is answered.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: The question was whether I had sought to communicate with the premiers since the meeting in Winnipeg last Wednesday. The answer is no, nor have they attempted to communicate with me.

● (1125)

Mr. Clark: Madam Speaker, by the Prime Minister's logic, he must have believed he was giving more power to the people he had incarcerated when he introduced the War Measures Act.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Clark: Why did the Prime Minister not seek a meeting with representatives of provincial governments after the meeting on Tuesday? Will he tell the House of Commons whether he will initiate those discussions, as the leader of the national Government of Canada, to see if we can find a way to change our Constitution in our country, rather than shipping our business off to the British?

An hon. Member: You are rather desperate, Joe.

Oral Questions

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition refers to the people incarcerated under the War Measures Act.

An hon. Member: Four hundred and fifty persons.

Mr. Trudeau: Let me remind him that his party and his leader supported the invocation of the War Measures Act.

Mr. Andre: We believed you; that was the problem.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: It was the last time we believed you.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Other hon. members of the House want to ask questions. I have already allowed the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition an extra question, which is not unusual. But we need the co-operation of the House so that I can allow everybody who wants to put a question today to be included in the Question Period. So, I would ask hon. members not to shout; we must conduct this debate in a serene fashion—

An hon. Member: Serene!

Madam Speaker:—and I would like members to co-operate—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Madam Speaker:—with me.

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, in so far as incarcerating people under the War Measures Act is concerned I would remind the Leader of the Opposition that they were incarcerated by the administration of justice of the province of Quebec; that they were in their prisons, by their policemen, by their acts; and that this was recognized when the government of Quebec paid damages to many of the people who had been incarcerated by them as a result of the War Measures Act.

The Leader of the Opposition asked if I would initiate discussions with the premiers. I have replied to that. We have been discussing for many months. A time comes when somebody has to make up his mind. The premiers seem unable to make up their minds because they have been meeting since October trying to find some alternative that they would even agree with among themselves. They have not communicated any such agreement to myself, to the press or, I take it, to the Leader of the Opposition. But I will initiate discussions with them, as soon as Canada has its own Constitution and as soon as Canadians have given themselves the means to improve that Constitution.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

REQUEST FOR REMOVAL OF REFERENDUM PROVISIONS IN CONSTITUTIONAL RESOLUTION

Hon. Jake Epp (Provencher): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Right Hon. Prime Minister. He said that he is giving more powers to the provinces; it is passing strange that eight of them would be rejecting those additional powers.