

● (1425)

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): On the first part of the question, Madam Speaker, I think the wisdom of the rules of the House is justified in that I do not know about the clause and what was given in exchange, as he says—

An hon. Member: You will find out.

Mr. Trudeau: I will find out when the committee reports, but I think the substance of the question is more serious and I will attempt to answer that seriously. Our position has been, Madam Speaker, that when we brought the resolution before the House we had at least the New Democratic Party onside and we had—

An hon. Member: They sold out early.

Mr. Trudeau: —and we had the Premier of Ontario and the Premier of New Brunswick onside. In other words, we all thought that this action was necessary and important at this time. Since then we have heard many witnesses in committee, and the position taken by the government and expressed when the Minister of Justice brought in his amendments was that any amendment we could bring in which would increase the support and augment the consensus behind this resolution would be accepted by the government. But we would not accept an amendment, no matter how desirable it would be, if it were going to diminish the support we have now.

Our position on that was that these amendments would be discussed at the second stage.

An hon. Member: That is leadership?

Mr. Trudeau: The important thing is to get the resolution through. That is leadership, Madam Speaker.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: Sixty-four per cent.

Mr. Trudeau: I think the hon. member opposite is really off base when he talks about waffling. We hear that the Conservative party—

An hon. Member: Are you going to waffle?

Mr. Trudeau: —is in favour of a charter—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I am afraid I have to interrupt the Right Hon. Prime Minister. I would ask him to answer the question that is asked in the House—

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): He is doing his best.

Madam Speaker: —rather than answering the interjections that come from other members. The hon. member for Provencher.

Mr. Epp: Madam Speaker, I want to put a supplementary question to the Prime Minister. He said that many witnesses appeared before the committee and that is true. Invariably,

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they wanted property rights. Many Canadians want the guarantee of property rights—

An hon. Member: Most of them.

Mr. Epp: —included in the charter of rights. I want to ask the Prime Minister why it was in view of the testimony of the Minister of Justice when he said, "We decided, the Prime Minister and I, that we would not accept"—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Clark: When did he say it, Madam Speaker?

Madam Speaker: I was not there, but I believe that the hon. member is now quoting proceedings from the committee and that is not allowed in this House at this time.

Mr. Lawrence: It is a policy question and an important question.

Mr. Epp: Madam Speaker, I should like to ask the Prime Minister, in view of the statements made at various times and by his minister that they needed the support of the hon. member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent) and the NDP and the support of Premier Blakeney and the NDP—

Some hon. Members: Order, order!

Mr. Epp: —could the Prime Minister answer this: Why was that pressure so extreme that he was, in fact, willing to override—

Mr. Lalonde: His name is not Peter.

Mr. Epp: —the wishes of the majority of Canadians who wanted to see property rights included?

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, in so far as the federal government and jurisdiction is concerned, property rights are now contained in the Bill of Rights passed when the Right Hon. John Diefenbaker was Prime Minister.

An hon. Member: So is the preamble.

Mr. Trudeau: In that sense, Madam Speaker, property rights are protected now.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: They are in so far as federal jurisdiction is concerned. I understand that the position of the Tory party—

Mr. Clark: That is not what Bob Kaplan said.

Mr. Trudeau: —is that they do not want to impose the charter on the provinces.

An hon. Member: What is the position of the Grit party?

Mr. Trudeau: That is the position of the Tory party.

An hon. Member: What is the Grit position?