

The Constitution

Mr. Harquail: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. This institution is what debating is about. If I were to debate with the right hon. gentleman, I would suggest that he should speak with the hon. member for York North (Mr. Gamble) who has some suggestions about his performance in recent times, if I remember correctly.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Harquail: That is what concerns the right hon. gentleman. That is what preoccupies the right hon. gentleman, especially with the type of advice he received tonight. That is why he is concerned, that is why he is grabbing for straws. He has been on every side. I could not imagine any other position he could take on this issue. He has been on every side of the waterfront. That is what he has been doing. He does not say that we came back here early, that we reconvened the session earlier than planned. He does not mention that.

An hon. Member: A 24-hour debate.

Mr. Harquail: They are on this 24-hour kick. Do they think they can mislead and fool Canadians?

An hon. Member: Not as well as you can.

Mr. Harquail: Do they think they can fool Canadians as the House leader for the official opposition tried to do this afternoon? The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre tried to twist what Madam Speaker had said in this honourable chamber and tried to tear away the respect we all have for the Chair. Is that what it is supposed to be all about—anything at all costs? Is that the position being taken by the opposition?

Mr. Clark: It is your policy.

Mr. Harquail: With respect to the constitution—

An hon. Member: You have no respect.

Mr. Harquail: We all believe in a good foundation. Usually one starts with a foundation. I would have thought premiers, Canadians and parliamentarians here would want to co-operate to bring the constitution back here. We have our Canadian flag and we have our national anthem, O Canada. For the last 53 years of federal-provincial conferences we have seen delaying tactics. First we got the flag, more recently we got O Canada, and now we are getting down to discussing the constitution. I think that explains the situation very adequately for Canadians. Because of the adversary system, they feel they must fight every issue—the flag, O Canada, Canada itself and the constitution—just for the sake of being able to say that they have been a good opposition. Especially when it is as plain as the noses on their faces, can they not see the light and understand what Canadians want?

● (2320)

Mr. Kilgour: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Members on this side of the House will agree to say nothing further during

the hon. member's speech if he will agree to say something to the House.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Harquail: Mr. Speaker, that intervention is typical. It is a waste of the time of the House and it is not fair. At one time the hon. member was, I believe, the parliamentary secretary to the House leader and I would have thought he would have picked up a little in the short time he was in that position. You do not raise frivolous points of order and take up the time of another speaker to do it. I respectfully request him not to do that.

What are we witnessing here? There is a section in the Criminal Code which talks about inciting. I submit that some of the comments which have been made in recent days, and especially today, by previous speakers on the opposite side of the House, fall dangerously close to inciting Canadians—spreading fear about the threat and danger of what is going to happen to Canada.

An hon. Member: You cannot incite with the truth.

Mr. Harquail: I would like to read from a recent letter to an editor signed by a Canadian from Jasper, Alberta. It says:

I have been visiting Ottawa for some weeks and have followed carefully the political speeches of the various party leaders.

Since my home is in western Canada and I am reasonably familiar with the views of our fellow citizens out there, may I say that the artless naiveté of Mr. Joe Clark with respect to the possibility of western Canada separating from the rest of the country on account of the constitutional question is pure hallucination.

That is the truth. The letter goes on to say:

Where would we go on our own? We are in no way prepared to defend ourselves in case of a war. Would we wish to be gobbled up by the United States? We know that the American states have much less independence and rights than have the provinces of Canada.

And these will be protected when we patriate the constitution, protected to an even greater extent. The writer of the letter goes on to say:

It is little wonder that Canadians quickly got the low-down on our Joe and dumped him promptly.

I read that magnificent letter of Prof. Arthur Lower of Queen's University and I agree with him completely. Truly, "If you, Mr. Prime Minister, succeed in holding us together and preventing the provinces destroying us, no name in Canadian history will go down in greater honour than yours."

And the letter is signed by J. R. Dietrich, of Jasper, Alberta.

An hon. Member: Which newspaper?

Mr. Harquail: I am prepared to say where I received the information. It was in *The Citizen*.

We have all travelled across this country and we all have a very deep sense of pride in being Canadian. Part of my work in the last six years has taken me to the west. I have relatives and, yes, I have friends there. They are true Canadians, they are in a majority and they are not talking about separation. They are talking about the future of this country; that is what they talk about because they are sincerely dedicated to keeping the country together. That is what I support. That is what I