

Government Orders

I will say to them at that particular time, they know everything has to be installed by June; otherwise it will not proceed. I have here the timetable for the boundaries readjustment in front of me. Unless this bill clears the House by the end of June, unless Royal Assent is given by June 22, this whole thing will not be possible.

I say to the members across the way, shame on them for having deliberately held this piece of legislation to give better, more effective representation to all Canadians.

• (1720)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Benoît Tremblay (Rosemont, BQ): Mr. Speaker, a little while ago, I heard the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell read a letter concerning the October crisis. He did not read it all and did not say who wrote it. We know that it can only have been signed by the Premier of Quebec at the time, Robert Bourassa. I am very sad to hear the member recall these events as if they were something Canada and the Canadian Parliament should be proud of.

I believe that everything that has come out regarding the Cabinet discussions at the time clearly shows that if ever there was a dark time in Canada's recent history, it was then. I can assure him that now that we have a Premier with a backbone in Quebec, we will not see such a letter in the months to come.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I always like to hear the hon. member speak about the head office and his leader in Quebec, the head of the provincial government, whom he praises and says he has guts, courage, etc.

I ask my colleagues to ponder over these few questions. Is that the same leader as the one who refuses to hold a referendum because he knows he will lose? Is that the provincial leader who postpones the referendum until next fall? Is that the leader who broke the formal promise he made to Quebecers during the election campaign? Is it another person? It must be. It certainly cannot be the same one.

I know the hon. member from the other side is only a member of a local branch of the Parti Québécois, the one they call the Bloc, and that the head office is far away. But I would suggest he makes a conference call to talk to other representatives of the head office. And when he gets his information from that head office, he will find out something we all know already, that is, the Parti Québécois does not have the courage to call the referendum immediately. They say they must wait because people are not ready, but in fact it is because they do not want to lose.

[*English*]

Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, there were several things in the speech of the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell that I agreed with and a few that I did not agree with. He said one thing, perhaps inadvertently, and I would like to give him a chance to elaborate on a particular

comment he made that if we do not pass this bill we will not have a redistribution before the next election.

Is it not in fact the case that the present electoral boundary redistribution process is under suspension and if we do not pass this bill we simply resume with the process as it is virtually now completed and could be completed fairly quickly? Is that not a more realistic option than restarting the process all over again at the cost of some \$5 million to \$6 million?

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, that is an interesting question. This same electoral redistribution that he refers to, the bill we have put under suspension in order to get this better one, would not have the measure of providing quinquennial redistribution to increase the number of seats in British Columbia, which some of his colleagues have said was under-represented by not proceeding with a bill like this. This is the same party that advocates both positions.

I say to the hon. member, he may be from the next province over, but he should discuss this issue with his friends from B.C. if he wants to go back to the bill that is under suspension as opposed to Bill C-69. Bill C-69 is far better in terms of providing more even redistributions in a quicker way and that are fairer to all Canadians. Surely he knows that, but if he does not, the people of British Columbia—

The Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate. The hon. member for Mercier.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ): Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to say that we have just heard a prime example of contempt for the Quebec people as they are known now, after having been for a long time the French Canadian nation.

• (1725)

In this Parliament and the previous one, if other members had respected the people of Quebec, Quebec's history would have been different, and I would like to talk about that, because after all, we will have to live together in any case as neighbours.

I may recall that Daniel Johnson senior was descended from Irish immigrants who spoke no French. In 1965, he gave his party a fresh start with his book, published under the title *Égalité ou Indépendance*, which became the slogan for his convention and his election campaign.

Daniel Johnson wrote the following: "Our English Canadian compatriots refer to a nation consisting of two peoples, while according to our French concept of the Canadian fact, we say there one people consisting of two nations. The confusion arises from the fact that English puts more emphasis on the political connotation of the word, while French uses the word in its sociological context. If we go by the description I just gave, there is no doubt Canada has two nations. Canada has two communities that are distinct by reason of their language, religion, culture, traditions, history and finally, a common desire to live together. Even in provinces where they are a minority, they have a natural tendency to regroup on a regional or local basis so as to create an environment in which they can flourish". As Daniel Johnson said in 1965: "The fundamental