

Government Orders

going to follow their view". He is not going to do that. That man is not going to be moved by a non-binding poll.

This shows how bankrupt this government is for ideas. I think I have wakened a few of my colleagues on the other side. I am glad for that. The point is if you are dealing with a federal system you do not go trying to hammerlock the premiers into agreeing with you.

You do not do that. You do not threaten them when there is no reason to threaten them, when progress is being made. You surely do not come out with some half—I was going to use an unparliamentary word—donkey, there you go—half donkey kind of referendum which is only going to divide people, which is only going to be ridiculous because it will be so confusing. Finally, it will cost \$108 million for very little.

In conclusion, I would just like to say that we have to trust the people. We have to believe in the people. We have to do what we were elected to do. We should be leaders. We should be leaders who say: This is what we can do for the constitutional problems that we have caused.

If we can get together here in this House and put all this stupid partisanship aside and say: "Look, this is what we need", we could do it.

There has been progress with all the three leaders here and other leaders as well who have said that we believe that Canada is much more important than these political games, this referendum here and referendum there because finally, it is not going to be a referendum which is going to solve our problems.

It is not going to be millions upon millions of dollars spent on polling which we have never seen the results of from this government. That is not going to solve our problems, and it is not going to be us constantly making on the government side these TV commercials showing what a great place Canada is.

Of course it is a great place, but we are not responding to the real problems which are constitutional in nature.

• (1820)

I just simply say, let us quit zig-zagging around here. Let us go to the heart of the problem and make sure that the elected officials do their jobs and that we do not waste any more taxpayers' money. I was not elected here to waste money, not to spend \$100 million.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Pierre Hogue (Outremont): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognising me and for giving me the opportunity to use the next couple of minutes to make a few comments on this issue.

I will not review in detail the amendments proposed by our colleague from Jonquière. He undoubtedly put a lot of thought into them and structured them in such a way that they are interesting and can be easily analysed. But our colleague from Edmonton South West raised the issue of the proposed amendments and I believe—as a matter of fact, I am certain of it—he studied—and analysed the consequences of those amendments. During the remarks he made yesterday, he was able to put the whole debate in context.

We are dealing with the very fibre of the Canadian nation. This debate is not solely a parliamentary debate, it is also a debate which makes the members of this House spokespersons. The members opposite should not turn this into a charade. For some time now, these people, who sense that their ship is about to sink, have been manipulating the House and manipulating the members in order to—

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I would hope that the hon. member would give the other hon. member an opportunity to speak. After all, he is a colleague from your province and we would all like to hear from him.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Hogue: I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I really appreciate that you could put this debate well above partisan politics and, particularly, above personal issues. But, there are in this House members, particularly from the Bloc Québécois, who make sophisms. Finally, those sophisms become dangerous. On the surface, they appear interesting, but when you dissect them, you fully realize that they are dangerous for society as a whole, not only in Quebec, but across Canada.

They talk about freedom, about gagging, about a lack of democracy, and they revel in a number of notions and concepts. They want yes—and-no committees in order to guarantee freedom. Freedom, Mr. Speaker, is not necessarily in controlling. Canadians are able to make their own opinion, their own judgment, their own evaluation, and it is not relying very much on the national conscience, on the conscience of Canadian citizens in each province to think that, if there were umbrella commit-