

Interim Supply

may have an argument of his own to make in the future.

Mr. Rhéaume: I doubt that.

Mr. Woolliams: The hon. member is a good lawyer. If it is not relevant to discuss section 91 or the Fulton formula or the formula of the government, then I would ask him what is relevant here. This is what I was discussing before I was interrupted by the minister of health. I would ask hon. members opposite to read the article entitled "Futility in Parliament" and in particular what it says about their own members and their own government in this regard. That is all I am going to say about that.

Now I will go back to my original argument. I outlined a few moments ago the powers which are set out in section 91. I also pointed out that the amendment of 1949 gave parliament the right to petition to change its powers. Under the new formula that right to amend the powers of the central government which are set out in section 91—the residuary powers provided either by section 91 or section 92—have to a certain degree been given to the provinces. Therein lies the danger: The powers of the central government may be whittled down and lost.

Let us look at what the *Winnipeg Free Press* says about this in an article written by Maurice Western on the editorial page:

It would be pleasant if all Canadians could join in the heady self-congratulatory mood of the federal and provincial governments over the scheme they have announced for making the British North America Act a Canadian document. In the fortnight that has passed since the scheme was unveiled it has become clear that no one at either level of government has the slightest intention of telling the whole story. On the contrary some of the premiers seem not even to comprehend the real meaning of what they have done; others have tried to throw a smokescreen around the whole subject.

The hon. member for Queens talked this afternoon about the contribution which the premier of Ontario made, and I think he made a good contribution. He gave a warning to the country about the whittling away of the powers of the central government. Because without the central government there will be no provincial governments; Canada will consist of ten states.

An hon. Member: Hear, hear.

Mr. Woolliams: Someone says "hear, hear". I think it must be Mr. Thatcher from Saskatchewan, but anyway that does not matter. The article continues:

What is the truth behind all this obfuscation? What has really happened is that the ten provinces and the federal government have connived to bring

about the most sweeping constitutional change in Canadian history, enormously enhancing provincial authority and introducing principles which could go a long way toward destroying the essential powers of the central government.

Those were my words this morning and they are the words of a competent newspaperman in this country and appear in a national newspaper. They are words of warning to Canadians that we as members of parliament may be endorsing a new and sweeping constitutional change.

Mr. McIlraith: Would the hon. member permit a question at this time?

Mr. Woolliams: Certainly.

Mr. McIlraith: Is he arguing that that undoubtedly responsible newspaperman is a better authority on constitutional law on this point than is Hon. Davie Fulton?

Mr. Woolliams: No. I want to read now what Mr. Fulton said to me about this. He agrees with the *Winnipeg Free Press*. I am glad the minister asked that question because Mr. Fulton says this:

In so far as—

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Chairman, a point of order.

Mr. Woolliams: There you are. As soon as I make a point in answer to the minister a point of order is raised. Surely there is no point of order here. The minister has asked me a question and I want to refer to what has been said in this regard.

The Chairman: A point of order when raised by an hon. member has to be submitted for the consideration of the Chair.

Mr. Grégoire: My point of order is completely in order and is meant only to facilitate the task of the hon. member for Bow River. May we know from what source he quotes Mr. Fulton, just to have it on the record? I do not want to insult the hon. member but I do want that on the record.

Mr. Woolliams: I am reading from a brief from Mr. Fulton. I have been in communication with him; he is a friend of mine, a former minister of justice and he is a Conservative. Naturally I am interested in his comments. I have my ideas and he has his ideas. No one suggests that law is an exact science; we have only to read the many cases concerning the interpretation of statutes to determine that.

Now I want to answer the minister because he asked me a perfectly proper question. I am now reading what Mr. Fulton