

*Government Orders*

out there that have to be met. This should have had a full airing.

Every member who wanted to participate should have been able to speak. Instead we are cut off at the pass with this allocation of time with all questions to be put tonight by five o'clock. That is totally wrong and does not breed the goodwill and non-partisan, bipartisan atmosphere that is going to be so necessary if some of the wounds of this country are to be healed.

Last night I was in my riding at a very inspirational meeting, an adventure spring citizenship festival. Main-street Canada was there: fire chiefs, police chiefs, municipal leaders and 300 to 400 Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, all reaffirming their faith in Canada, getting certificates of citizenship. I would like every member of Parliament to get to some of those citizenship festivals to get in touch with the pulse of the real people rather than just hearing ourselves talk in this chamber where sometimes we lose touch with the real people. I could do a whole speech on that citizenship festival last night and on the faith of those basic people, the taxpayers of Canada and the youth of Canada who are going to be the leaders of tomorrow, and how they feel about Canada.

In this Chamber with this Bill C-81 and the mechanical debate we have had up until today, and now with the allocation of time order that is going to cut us off tonight, it certainly does not give you much inspiration to talk about the nation in the way the founders talked about this nation and helped to bring us together.

In my very short time left, I want to be very clear that on Bill C-81, in terms of the principle of a referendum, I certainly have said for some time that this government especially, in view of the Constitution and especially this government's credibility with the people, it is fundamental that there is some reference to the people to approve whatever constitutional package comes forward from the constitutional discussions and/or the question that is going to be framed in this House.

This bill does not even go part way. The constitutional referendum should be a binding referendum. It should be national in scope and it should be a single question, yes or no. I do support those in this House who have very real fears about the reason for this bill at the present time which does not even meet any of those tests.

It can be very manipulative, have different questions in different parts of the country and have some referendum questions that are not going to be put to other provinces. If that happens it is going to be most divisive indeed. For members over there, including the member from Etobicoke who has certainly led the way in the academic research on referendums and plebiscites, I find it passing strange that some members on the government side do not appreciate from their history that in effect if we are going to have a referendum it has to be a single question, it has to be national in scope and has to be binding.

The specious argument of government is that a referendum cannot amend the Constitution. We know that but it certainly can have a motion to bind the result of whatever the people decide in this Parliament. This Parliament is one of the eight parliaments together, the national Parliament and seven parliaments representing 50 per cent of the people, that can amend the Constitution.

There is no reason at all for this hokery-pokery and specious reasoning. There is no reason to say we are not going to put a binding clause on a referendum bill because this Parliament does not amend the Constitution by itself. It certainly could be restricted in what it did if there were a proper referendum question.

It is passing strange to me, and I am afraid we are heading down to another Meech Lake fiasco of imposing artificial deadlines, when I hear the intergovernmental minister talking at these different constitutional conferences that we are certainly making progress here. I actually do not even have to turn up the sound on television any more to realize that in effect some of this so-called progress is maybe some progress, but the real questions have not been decided.

What I have one of the greatest fears about is that frankly the constitutional fatigue has set in and in effect there is going to be a charade or a mirage at the end of the day that we resurrect a form of Meech and then put off the real serious questions and decisions on Senate reform and the inherent right of the aboriginals for self-government, whatever that means, let alone the division of powers. I am very concerned that in the heat of the summer with constitutional fatigue with the looseness of this referendum bill, a very bad question or questions could be put to the Canadian people that will