

needed to get out of this constitutional morass we find ourselves in.

In general, I think referenda are a good idea. I am in favour of referenda. I believe in the city of Montreal, for example, that people should be particularly consulted before they are forced to accept these huge tax increases or forced to accept these mega projects, whether it be an Olympic stadium or whether it be any other huge expense. People should be questioned when the situation is one of a yes or no and where there is a process which is fair.

This is not a fair process. Bill C-81 is not a fair law. This law is bad. A bad law is a bad law is a bad law. I do not know when this debate became some sort of morality play where, if you are against this bad law, you are against Canada. How ridiculous can it be?

I heard that patriotism was the last refuge of scoundrels but I never knew that it would be the refuge of Liberals and Conservatives, but it seems to be. We have transformed what I thought would be a legitimate debate on a legitimate law. It is a legitimate law. It is a law which is being passed by a legitimately formed House. All of a sudden we have drawn this line in the sand that if you are against this particular referendum, you are an enemy of Canada, you are an enemy of the Prime Minister and an enemy of the people. No, my gosh, that is not the case at all.

We believe this is bad law. We believe that people should be consulted in a fair and honest manner. When it is said that this is not fair, if I was a lawyer before any judge and I consider members here my judges collectively, you would have to make the case why it is unfair.

We had a number of committees saying there must be a double majority. There must be a protection for certain groups in Canada in order to make sure that this referendum is fair. I can talk about Beaudoin-Edwards, which is where that recommendation was. I can talk about Beaudoin-Dobbie and their recommendation or I can go back 10 years and talk about Pépin-Robarts, with the same recommendations.

I intend to vote against the referendum bill. I intend to vote against it for several reasons. First is its unfairness. Second, we are talking about \$108 million—not thou-

### *Government Orders*

sands—\$108 million super survey that may or may not take place, that may take place in every province but Quebec. That is interesting. That means Quebecers are second class citizens and that they may not get to vote. Or it may take place in every province but British Columbia because perhaps they are going to have their own referendum. It may not take place in Alberta because Alberta will be having its own referendum.

It is not a referendum in a traditional sense.

It is not saying: "Look, we believe in you, the people. We are going to trust you. We are going to follow you. You just simply tell us what your opinion is, and we will put it into law". No. It is a non-binding referendum. In other words, it is a referendum which is saying: "Tell us what you think. What we are going to do is make our own law anyhow. We will not guarantee to you that you going into that voting booth is what we are going to do".

What kind of signal does this send to the public, that we really care about their opinion? If this government cared about the opinion of the public, of Canadians, it would have put the GST to a referendum. I would love to have seen it do that. It would have put the free trade to a referendum. I would love to have seen it do that, but it did not.

Let us not be foolish. This government does not trust the people. It does not care about the people. This government just wants to manipulate for \$108 million some sort of a rinky-dink kind of referendum that it may not or may have in certain parts of the country.

This is a recipe for disaster. This is not for friends of Canada or enemies of Canada. This is a recipe for disaster. It is surprising for a government which has, I think, made some good progress on the constitutional front with the different committees that have held hearings before. It has done fairly well.

The first ministers right now are just about getting together on some more delicate points. I am saying: Let them do their job. That is what they were elected to do.

I do not see how a referendum could possibly do anything but provoke Clyde Wells, the premier of Newfoundland. Are we going to tell Clyde Wells: "We do not trust you. We are just going to hold this over your head so if your people vote maybe 51 per cent against, you are