

I wonder why the government would be stubborn about that. Earlier, when I was behind the curtains, I heard the hon. member from Kingston and the Islands say that he had doubts about the legality of the amendment. I think that is not a very strong argument because at this point in time, I do not see how we could question the decision made by the Speaker to the effect that this amendment was admissible. Therefore, if the Speaker said that the amendment was in order, I wonder how we could challenge that. Other arguments must be found to justify a vote against this amendment.

• (1730)

It seems extremely important to me that we recognize that Quebec does bring an essential contribution to Canada. Confidentially speaking, between you and I, if English speaking Canada is not already an American state, it is because we are here. We make the difference. Without French speaking people, what makes us different from the Americans? We eat like them, we drink like them, we do the same things, we watch the same TV. Everything will reach us much more easily. As you know, American imperialism is expanding all around the world. It will cross our borders much more easily.

What makes a Canadian a Canadian is the fact that he can say he lives in a bilingual country. Canadians are in a country where a large percentage of the population, 25 per cent, is francophone. It is a country with a dual culture. It has the underlying wealth of two cultures, the English and the French cultures.

What other country in the world can claim such a cultural wealth? We are really, I believe, vital to Canada. We have said that, so long as we are not sovereign, we will defend the interests of Quebecers.

It must look rather odd for a sovereignist to rise in this House and say: "Hang on to the furniture, give us at least 25 per cent representation". We have not left the country yet. We are still here, and our duty, what we see as our basic responsibility, is to say to the all of the hon. members in this House that it is their duty to give us 25 per cent representation. We were here first; you conquered us. We formed a union in 1840. We decided to live together. We established a sort of trade agreement. We built a railroad that we are in the process of demolishing. At least give us 25 per cent representation. It will not cost you anything. On the contrary, it will mean a lot for you. You must realize this while there is still time.

After we go, if ever we leave, because we are basically hoping to, it will not have cost you a thing to give us the 25 per cent we are asking for as a gesture of openness and understanding toward a nation you claim you want to keep with you. It seems to me that, if the government really wants to prove conclusively that it cares for us, it must maintain our level of representation.

The Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Government Orders

Some hon. members: Question.

The Deputy Speaker: The vote is on Motion No. 4, standing in the name of Mr. Langlois. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 76.1(8), the recorded division on the motion stands deferred.

[Translation]

The House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred divisions at the report stage of the bill now before the House.

Call in the members.

And the division bells having rung:

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the division on the question now before the House stands deferred until Tuesday, March 28 at 5.30 p.m. at which time the bells to call in the members will be sounded for not more than 15 minutes.

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• (1735)

FIREARMS ACT

The House resumed from March 13 consideration of the motion that Bill C-68, an act respecting firearms and other weapons, be read the second time and referred to a committee; and of the amendment.

The Deputy Speaker: When the bill was last before the House, the member for Souris—Moose Mountain had four minutes remaining in his time.

Mr. Bernie Collins (Souris—Moose Mountain, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak again to Bill C-68 and the proposed amendment.

An item of the bill that I really feel needs to be addressed is the issue of non-compliance. Many citizens of Canada would be put in a position of being criminals if they did not register their