

I want to say one other thing about referenda and their effect on this country. These are important words to consider when we talk about whether the public comes up with a wise decision in its vote in a referendum. The Quebec legislature would have voted for separation. There was a majority of separatists. If the final authority in Quebec had been in the legislature, Quebec would have voted for separation. But the people of Quebec voted for Canada in that referendum. That is the difference.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Regan:** I have one more example of why a referendum has proved to be good in this country. I wish the hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie) was here. If there had been a vote by those elected to the founding legislature of Newfoundland in 1947, 1948, 1949 or whatever the year they first met was, they would have voted against joining Canada. The hon. member for St. John's West, his family and the rest of the merchants of Water Street were the ones who were deadly against joining Canada.

**Mr. Nowlan:** Don Jamieson.

**Mr. Regan:** However, because it was possible to make an appeal to the public by way of plebiscite—the legislature would have voted against Canada—the people of Newfoundland voted for Canada, and that is why Newfoundland is in the country.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Nowlan:** Don Jamieson lost.

**Mr. Regan:** I want finally to refer to the irresponsible position taken by the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition. After going through the whole document trying to find something he could attack, some reason to be different and to justify his position as Leader of the Opposition, his choosing this referendum process is a pretty weak effort.

● (1540)

Mr. Speaker, the national government has responsibilities that no one province can fulfil. The fact is that at federal-provincial conferences, since the very first one, it is always the prime minister of our country who presides. He is the chairman. Whether we like it or not, in a federal system there has to be a difference between the national government and the provincial government.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Regan:** I believe, with all the strength and conviction of my body and soul, that in this resolution the Government of Canada is properly discharging its responsibility. So let us get on with having a Canadian constitution and doing away once and for all with the embarrassment of admitting to people

from other countries that we still have these remnants of a colonial past.

**Mr. Friesen:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I wonder if the minister would permit me to ask one question, since he has about three minutes left of the time allotted to him.

**Mr. Regan:** Certainly, I would be honoured.

**Mr. Friesen:** The minister is surely aware that, for example, postal workers have a right, within their union, to prevent movement of postal workers from one locality to the other without prior consent of their local. It is true also in the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers each local can certify its workers and prevent workers from another local moving into its area without the certification of that union. This is clearly in contravention of this provision in the constitution. I wonder if he, as Minister of Labour (Mr. Regan), is willing to go to the postal and electrical workers and tell them that under this section their rights will be declared unconstitutional?

**Mr. Regan:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the honourable and distinguished member for his question but I do not think it particularly relevant.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Regan:** What this provision establishes is the right of a person to seek employment in any part of the country. That does not mean that there cannot continue to be professional requirements, for example, that only a qualified lawyer can become a member of the bar. If, on the other hand the requirements placed against a person moving to another area and joining a new local or new association are unduly restrictive, it is quite possible that the Supreme Court, in interpreting the provisions of the constitution, might find, in some extreme circumstance, that there was a breach. If that is the case, then, like all good citizens—and there are no better citizens than members of the trade unions—unions will conform. I have no doubt of that whatsoever. I hope that deals with the hon. member's question.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Nowlan:** Mr. Speaker, I happen to be the next speaker, as the minister knows, but I should like to ask the minister a question in view of something he said in the closing remarks of his speech. I know he is trying to catch a plane, but would he permit me a question before I start my own interesting comments on the substance of the resolution and perhaps indirectly on some comments made by the minister?

Since the minister and I share a certain piece of geography in the deep east, I should like to ask him a question on the amendment procedure prescribed in section 42. Would he agree with me that because of the population distribution, in effect when you refer to two Atlantic provinces forming 50 per cent of the population in the Atlantic region, you bar Prince Edward Island forever and a day, together with any other