

affairs. This is why we have trouble. You are arrogant. You are entering into provincial jurisdictions. These are no longer the days of Mackenzie King. The provinces want to be strong, and they want their rights respected." What do the provinces want us to do about it so long as the constitution is there? One speaker said today that it is not the Bible, it is not something written on Mount Sinai, it is not sacred. Yet it is, because it is the constitution of this country until it is changed.

**Mr. McGrath:** Where does that leave the have-not provinces?

**Mr. Mackasey:** I will get to that subject in a minute. Mr. Randall, who probably wrote this article, and if he did not someone in his office did, also said the following:

"Few actions could do more damage to the working out of a more rational federal system in Canada than the inevitable confusion and upsetting of priorities which would occur if our federal system were short-circuited", the paper said.

● (6:50 p.m.)

This is the position of the province of Ontario, not of the province of Quebec. All the provinces except British Columbia sent delegations led by the cabinet minister responsible for housing. To the best of my knowledge not one of them got up and said: Let us see our jurisdiction in the field of housing transferred to the federal government where it should logically be because of the massive sums of money needed and the direct action required to deal with the housing crisis in this country. Even in a unitary state like Sweden, you wait six years for housing. I will not talk about the iron curtain countries where there is a dictatorship. I and others went to Poland and saw what type of accommodation is available for the workers. And there is no red tape or divided jurisdiction there. We should not say that everything in this country is bad. That is one of the great faults we have as Canadians. You can deprecate the remarks of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). You can say he is emphasizing the wrong priorities. You can say he is too rigid. How is he rigid? He is rigid because he understands the constitution, and understands the problems. He is saying we want a strong federal government and that the provinces need to be strong, too. Is he too rigid when he says to the provinces: If you want to raise monies, then raise your taxes? Is he too rigid when he tells a province to stay out of the federal field? Is he too rigid when he says we shall build an airport in Sainte Scholastique

### Housing

and not in St. Jean because this is a matter within federal jurisdiction and we refuse to play petty politics? Is he wrong, there?

I have heard opposition speakers say: You have no right to do certain things because you are interfering with provincial jurisdiction; you have not consulted with the provinces. I have heard that word "consult" ad nauseam. Now, the Prime Minister is saying: This is our area of jurisdiction and we want to be masters in it; if a province wants to be master in areas which directly concern it, it may. I remember that in the housing debate last year the former hon. member for Bromemissisquoi, a good member who knew all about housing, stood in this chamber and suggested that we should establish a ministry of housing. The next day he was castigated in about every editorial in Quebec, including *La Presse* for daring to suggest that the federal government set up a ministry in what is normally a provincial field.

This is the type of thing we encounter and will continue to face until the constitution is changed. It is all very well for members of the New Democratic party to say "to hell with the constitution." That is what they are saying, in effect. They change their policy like you change your shirt. They have gone all the way from two nations to associate state; there is Cliche's version, Taylor's version, the leader's version and back again and now nobody knows what version they are following. I don't.

It is quite possible that with the latest phase of socialist thinking about the constitution that housing is a federal responsibility on the logical grounds that the situation constitutes a national emergency. It is a national emergency.

**Mr. Stanfield:** The Prime Minister says it is not.

**Mr. Mackasey:** Oh, I was doing all right until the hon. gentleman came along. I would love to keep the hatchet buried. An hon. member over there referred to me as a hatchet man; that is what got me on my feet and will keep me on my feet. This is the dilemma in which we find ourselves. There is no excuse for the federal government failing to give a lead in the field of housing. There is no excuse for failing to show initiative, if we have failed to show initiative. I agree that the criticism which has been raised today is valid if we have not placed a high enough priority on housing. The Minister of Transport made this perfectly clear. Legislation will be before