

*Oral Questions*

message to Quebecers. The Prime Minister is intent on refuting the myth dreamt up by the separatists that the rest of Canada would form a monolithic block. Not so.

No one can predict how the other Canadian provinces will react the day after a vote in favour of Quebec separation, let alone claim that they will form a single block and ask the federal government to negotiate with a separated Quebec. The Prime Minister has clearly shown that the partnership plan of the separatists is just a scam to camouflage their plans for separation. The people of Quebec know that, and on October 30, they will vote no.

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**REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN**

**Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, did anyone forget to tell Daniel Johnson about the political events of the past 15 years? Daniel Johnson says in the brochure of the director general of elections in Quebec that governments should continue to reduce duplication, but does he remember his own inability to negotiate a withdrawal by the federal government from manpower training as demanded by everyone in Quebec?

Daniel Johnson says that he believes no constitutional change should take place without Quebec's consent, but does he remember that he has with him on the no side the man who orchestrated the strong arm strategy of 1982? Mr. Johnson has a very poor memory indeed. Fortunately, Quebecers do remember and will vote yes on October 30.

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**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

• (1415)

[Translation]

**REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN**

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in what should have been his most important speech in the referendum campaign, yesterday the Prime Minister simply gave Quebecers a warning by refusing to promise any sort of constitutional change to the present federal system. Once again, the Prime Minister has been the passionate defender of the status quo.

Are we to understand from the Prime Minister that he is asking Quebecers to vote no while refusing to commit to any constitutional change, even though his Quebec allies on the no side are rejecting the status quo?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I said very clearly yesterday to the people of Quebec that the referendum vote is a very serious one and what the Bloc Quebecois and the Parti Quebecois are proposing is separation, pure and simple. The leader of the Bloc Quebecois said clearly yesterday that he had no interest in any sort of union with

Canada, that he only wanted sovereignty. Perhaps he is in fact no longer the chief negotiator, but he certainly is the chief separator.

I have always said that Canada is evolving all the time and that there will certainly be changes—we make them everyday. But what do they want, the people of Quebec and, like them, all the people in Canada? They want an end to talk of constitutional problems. They want us to work together with the governments of Quebec and the other provinces, with business people and with all of society to create jobs and to give workers back their dignity in Quebec and elsewhere. This is why, after the voting on the referendum in ten or twelve days, we can get down to the real problems.

As far as constitutional changes are concerned, the debate today is not about that. We are answering the ambiguous question posed by the PQ and the separatists. The question is separation. If Quebecers understand well, they will understand that the issue is separation and Quebecers do not want to separate from Canada.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is always a surprise to hear the Prime Minister say in all seriousness that he wants to solve Canada's real problems when, during the past four weeks we have been sitting, the government has not tabled a single major piece of legislation on real issues. There are limits. We know he is keeping things until after the referendum.

The director general of election is distributing a brochure in Quebec, under the Referendum Act, which sets out the yes and the no positions. I would ask the Prime Minister whether the no side position in the brochure distributed by the director general of election accurately reflects his government's constitutional position?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have always said that, as the federal government, we wanted to make the Canadian federation work well, and it is vital administrative arrangements be found to achieve the goals we are seeking. The brochure states clearly that we are prepared to clarify existing duplications. In fact, we have signed nine agreements with the nine other provincial governments to end much of the duplication. The only government refusing to sign an agreement to discuss the elimination of duplication is the Government of Quebec. It refused, because it had no interest in making the federation work. It wants to make use of everything to delude Quebecers into thinking they will remain in Canada when it wants to get them out of Canada.

**Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would have appreciated an answer to my question, but, you will permit me to remind the Prime Minister that it was Daniel Johnson and the Minister of Labour, who at the time was a minister in the Johnson government, who refused to sign the cut-rate agreement he was proposing. He has a short memory. He has a very