

*Adjournment Debate*

One must be in the wheelhouse to see what shifts are taking place. I know we have spun the wheel and I know that the rudder is beginning to press against the waves and the sea—perhaps the observer, who is sitting on deck sipping his tea, sees the horizon much in the same direction and doesn't realize it, but perhaps he will find himself disembarking at a different island than the one he thought he was sailing for—

When I speak to my friends in the native community and my friends in the ethnic community I say I have the sinking feeling that we shall be landing on an island to which we did not think we were headed if we allow this resolution to go ahead, amended by a foreign country with entrenchment of special rights for some and not for others.

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

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

**Mr. Henderson:** May I call it ten o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

### GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING—APPROVAL OF UNILINGUAL ADVERTISEMENTS

**Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock-North Delta):** Mr. Speaker, on October 9 I asked a question of the Minister of State for Multiculturalism (Mr. Flemming), who is also in charge of government advertising. I was witness to the astounding defence which that minister was making that day in support of the government advertising campaign to justify the government's resolution to bring back the constitution.

● (2200)

One thing which all Canadians will accept is that television advertising is designed to oversimplify the most complex issues, problems or products. The idea is to simplify to the point of oversimplification. It is the job of a television advertiser to put the issues into a 30 second clip, and in this case they will determine the future of the country for generations to come. The fact that the government has hired an agency to put on the television screen the picture of flying geese to convey to the Canadian people the simplicity of the issue of bringing home or patriating the constitution is almost insulting. Canada is probably facing its most complex issue in the past decade, and the government is resorting to the simplest of techniques in an attempt to simplify the complexity of the issue.

The second thing I wanted to point out is that in this particular advertising campaign not only is the issue oversimplified, but there is also untruth. If one listens to the script of

those ads, they are saying very forthrightly that Canada has a constitution which was made in England; that it is time the constitution was brought home and we had a constitution made in Canada by Canadians. Historically, that is just plain wrong.

If I read my history books correctly, the Fathers of Confederation spent at least three years in Canada discussing, arguing, compromising and negotiating on the issues which faced the Canada of that day, and finally came up with a proposal to form the British North America Act which was then taken to England and passed by Westminster with only two minor changes being made. The fact is that the British North America Act is a constitution made in Canada by Canadians. The fact is that the television ads are blatantly untruthful.

The irony, as the hon. member for Prince George-Peace River (Mr. Oberle) just pointed out, is that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) who is a great anti-colonialist, wants to use our colonial station to revise the constitution in England in such a way that he can have his charter of rights and freedoms in Canada untouched by Canadian hands.

The government's advertising campaign on the constitution is oversimplified, untruthful and, third, misleading. On the one hand the Minister of State for Multiculturalism said in the House on October 9 that all the advertising was under the aegis and guidance of the Canadian Unity Information Office and that, therefore, it was a non-political, non-partisan campaign. Such a statement is plainly misleading. An officer of the Canadian Unity Information Office the very day of the minister's speech was reported in newspapers as having issued a statement to the effect that the final decision on specific cases in that advertising campaign were made by cabinet.

It is ironic that for two years a commission travelled across Canada studying the issues of unity. One of the co-chairmen of that commission is sitting in the House as a Liberal cabinet minister now, and he is being totally ignored. The Pepin-Robarts report has been totally ignored in the document which is under debate right now. It would appear as though there was a two-year campaign at a cost of millions of dollars that went for nothing in terms of the final product.

It is misleading for the Minister of State for Multiculturalism to say, as he did in his speech of October 9, that the final word comes from the Canadian Unity Information Office when in fact a decision was made by cabinet in the particular case which I brought to the attention of the House. I am referring to the portion of the campaign which used billboards; the fact is that the advertising on the billboards was unilingual. This is a total contravention of the bilingual act. If, as that officer of the Canadian Unity Information Office has said, the final decisions were made by cabinet, then they are responsible for the unilingual billboards which were in total contravention of the act and in violation of the law. How could the minister stand and say that it is a non-partisan campaign? One cannot have a non-partisan campaign when partisan decisions are made by cabinet. It is totally offensive for the government to wrap itself in the Canadian flag. I believe the hon. member for