

I do not subscribe to what the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Reid) said. He was supporting the theory of an arch-Tory, Edmund Burke, who said that we have to make our own decisions in the House. Edmund Burke did not represent many people, only a few hundred like himself. He could not hear the voices of the people because he was too far away. Two hundred years ago travel was very difficult.

Mr. Railton: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to say there is no truth in the assertion by the present speaker that there was pressure on members to vote in a certain way. That was certainly not the case in my party.

Mrs. Holt: I did not refer to our party at all. I know that the cabinet voted party solidarity. Perhaps it was a coincidence.

Mr. Railton: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It is about time we straightened out the matter on which the hon. member is speaking. There was absolutely no pressure on anyone to vote in a certain way. It was a completely free vote.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I must say that the hon. member is speaking about something of which the Chair is not aware. The Chair is to rule on the operation and functioning of this House in accordance with our Standing Orders. It is not in order to criticize a vote that has been taken. I do not think the way the hon. member has been speaking about votes has reflected on this House. She is speaking in general terms. I think the point raised by the hon. member for Welland (Mr. Railton) is more a point of disagreement. Whatever influence the hon. member is referring to is very intangible and is really not perceptible to the Chair.

● (1752)

Mrs. Holt: Mr. Speaker, I want to make it very clear I am not reflecting on the way in which people voted in this House, but I do favour a totally free vote ultimately so that as members of parliament, we can represent our constituents fully as a whole House when they make their feelings clear on major issues.

I would like to discuss the question of a referendum and answer the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock (Mr. Friesen) when he mentioned the statement of the hon. member for Windsor-Walkerville (Mr. MacGuigan), who is a very respected member of this House, who is the chairman of the Justice and legal affairs committee, an outstanding member and certainly well versed in his law. Several times he corrected the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock who implied that he, the member for Windsor-Walkerville, favoured a referendum. He made it quite clear, for the second or third time for that member opposite, on October 21, 1977, as reported at page 152 of *Hansard*. He was discussing the third point in his speech, and he said:

I am pleased, by the way, that the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock (Mr. Friesen) who I am sorry is no longer in the House, introduced my position on this with so much fanfare. I owe it to him that he read enough of my remarks from the previous occasion to indicate that I did say that there could be a referendum when our very system itself was at stake. I am not sure he appreciated the significance of those words, but what I was saying then is

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precisely what the Prime Minister is advocating now. When the country's government or the country's future itself is at stake, a referendum, of course, can be extremely appropriate. It was matters of ordinary policy which I was suggesting should not be taken from parliament and handled by way of referendum.

It may be of interest to the hon. member to know that his own leader, during the question period on October 20, 1977, seemed to be concerned that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) was proposing—and this is his statement—what he called a change to the tradition of the parliamentary system and to change it in a way that the government of Quebec is not proposing to change it—to have this referendum apply simply to one question relating to unity. Of course that is what the hon. member for Windsor-Walkerville stated, and whenever you see referendums in many countries of the world, it is always when major issues involve the whole state, its structure, its very existence. You can look at other countries, not just our own. A referendum is held when martial law is to be introduced. In Europe there was a referendums on whether a country should enter the European Common Market.

Mr. Friesen: On a point of order, I find it necessary to correct the record that the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs. Holt) is making. Or perhaps the hon. member for Windsor-Walkerville (Mr. MacGuigan) referred loosely to his memory of a year ago when he entered into the debate. But when I read from that record here on October 21, I quoted accurately what he had been saying a year ago. Perhaps on October 21 the hon. member for Windsor-Walkerville did not clearly remember what he had said a year ago, but I do want to read back into the record precisely what he said a year ago and state correctly, for the benefit of the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway, precisely what he said. I read, as to be found at page 143 of *Hansard*:

I find it hard to understand that hon. members can rise in this House and urge us to change our whole parliamentary system merely because they are not satisfied with a particular vote.

That is exactly what he said, and it is definitely different from what the hon. lady has just read.

Mrs. Holt: I don't know, Mr. Speaker, because I have not gone back to that portion of the record. But he certainly cleared up the record on October 21, and he also said:

All we are talking about now is the power to have such a referendum; we are not making a decision to go ahead with it.

The Prime Minister himself said the referendum would be concerned with the issue of national unity, a constitutional problem, and he discussed it in the context of enabling legislation that would make it possible, in the case of an emergency, to hold a referendum on the question of unity.

While I do not often quote *Macleans*, because I really think it is a pile of garbage and is very seldom accurate—in fact they have a great problem with their own prejudices and hates, and therefore cannot get their record straight—but there is one writer for *Macleans* occasionally, whom I do respect very much, Peter Desbarats. On October 3, 1977, during this very discussion in the House, Mr. Desbarats wrote an article on Quebec's supposed legislation under the heading "What Will a