

make a little trip to Quebec and choose a president. I have nothing against choosing a president. Mr. Speaker, this is all related to the economy. The greater the concern about the future of this great country called Canada, the more investments will go down and unemployment will go up. As I said earlier, the government cannot work any miracles. So, a president was elected and his last words to the Quebeckers, to the province of Quebec, to Quebec Canadians were: As far as I am concerned, I don't speak French and I am not interested in learning it. For him, it is not an official language. Then, we come here and we should all behave like saints and the RCMP should never go astray. I think that the RCMP should be above the law in some cases relating to the country's security, but it should especially be above the representatives of the people in some cases, because if justice does not prevail over politics, we are going to the dogs, Mr. Speaker.

This comment applies also to our Quebec colleagues. As the federal government, the Lévesque government has set up an inquiry commission into the RCMP activities and all the while, the real economic and politic problems are forgotten. Let us be serious. Let us sit down together, representatives of the provinces and of the federal government, and if our meeting must last three months, so be it, but let's do something positive.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say this: my wife and I have ten children, and it is in our interest, I think, that Canada should grow, just as it has done in recent years, and I think that as soon as we start showing a greater sense of responsibility in our statements, things will turn out better. Now the time has come to do away with frivolities, with opposition for the sake of opposition, with opposition for political gain. I think that the situation is too serious for that. Discontent has reached a critical point, especially between the two founding races of Canada, between French Canadians and English Canadians. I think that this thing has been carried far enough and that we must stop destroying each other, even here in this House. We must cooperate more with the provinces if we want good results.

● (1752)

[English]

Mr. Martin: Mr. Speaker, may I call it six o'clock?

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

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

Adjournment Debate

NATIONAL HARBOURS BOARD—ALLEGATION ACTION IN ANTICIPATION OF PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION DAMAGING MORALE OF EMPLOYEES

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Mr. Speaker, the other day in the House of Commons I followed up a question I had originally addressed to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) with regard to Bill C-6 which would transform a Crown agency, the National Harbours Board, into a ports authority. I had an answer, and then I had a debate with the parliamentary secretary, and I must tell the hon. gentleman that he outshone me. He did extraordinarily well and I did extraordinarily badly the last time we hooked up. Nevertheless, I shall try his mettle again. At any rate, the minister, his boss, said he was not pre-judging the will of parliament and that the department was merely carrying out pre-planning as far as possible and indicating to people in the employ of the National Harbours Board the opportunities which would be available to them under the proposed ports commission.

Following the exchange that evening I had calls from various people and visits from various other people, and I am now in a position to know that what I thought was happening is much more serious than I had imagined. It is serious, at least from the standpoint of those who are employed by the National Harbours Board and some of those who have been brought in from private industry to fill positions of extraordinary responsibility.

For example, I heard of one case where, under the screening process now being adopted, a man was found inadequate to occupy the position that he held formerly if he were to be transferred sideways to the new ports structure. On the other hand, he was asked to stay around for a while so that he could instruct his gifted successor on how to carry out his responsibilities. When things like that happen, Mr. Speaker, you have to wonder if the world is upside down, cockaloop or what.

In any event, I said I would return to this question and perhaps this is my last chance to speak on the subject, but I speak on it because we are dealing with a human issue. Once the decision was made to disband the National Harbours Board and appoint a ports commission and instead of having a Crown corporation, to have a body which was under the wing of the minister, I am still wondering why this could not have been done by some sideways transfer rather than putting all of these people, as I said the other day in my question to the minister, in the position of competing against themselves and others for their own jobs.

● (1802)

I do not think the minister wants to downgrade parliament or to denigrate the role of this place, but I think the procedure being used goes beyond the "pre-planning wherever possible" phrase which the minister used, and gets into a new operation, and in that sense I think the minister is outside the law. As a result I have no hesitation in bringing his gifted parliamentary secretary into the House this evening.

The other point is: Who set up the deciding group in what really becomes a competing faction within the Public Service