

Government Orders

referendum on the yes side and who all have organizers who belonged to the Parti Québécois and who took advantage of the PQ organization, as well as part of the Liberal Party which in some ridings supported the Conservatives, I imagine all these members will remember their roots.

I would also like to touch on some of the points the hon. member for Papineau—Saint-Michel raised during this debate. He felt that Quebecers and the Bloc Québécois were scared. We are not afraid of a referendum. However, we have certain principles. We maintain Quebecers should determine the future of Quebec. That is called the right to self-determination, recognized long ago by the NDP and recognized with a lot of fanfare last August by the Conservative Party at its convention in Toronto. So far it has not been recognized by the Liberal Party, but that is also a matter of principle. They never said so. I had discussions with Liberals and I asked them whether they agreed with the right to self-determination. They always answered: "We took part in the 1980 referendum." But when I suggested they say it, their jaws seemed to lock. They cannot say "Yes, we agree".

I think Quebecers should determine Quebec's future, just as Canadians in the other provinces should determine theirs. It is not up to the Americans. We will do it in Quebec, under Quebec legislation.

I repeat, we are not afraid of this referendum in Quebec. Who is? The federalist parties are afraid of a referendum on sovereignty as proposed by the Liberal government. We are not afraid to join the very broad consensus reached by Bélanger-Campeau. Three members remained outside this consensus: the hon. member for Papineau—Saint-Michel, together with Robert Libman and the ineffable member for Outremont, who did not even have the guts to say no anymore than he did to say yes.

The Bloc will support these amendments in order to show its opposition to the anti-democratic tenor of this bill. However, the fact remains that the bill lacks any legitimacy. If it were democratic, it would still lack legitimacy in Quebec, because it was rammed through at the last minute for the sole purpose of short-circuiting the serious process that has been taking place in Quebec

for the past two years, starting with Bélanger-Campeau and followed by Bill 150, a carefully controlled process light-years removed from the Spicer circus, Beaudoin-Edwards, Castonguay-Dobbie and Beaudoin-Dobbie or BoDo.

Our process was not one of those expensive circuses like the constitutional caravans we have had in Canada for the past thirty years.

Mr. Speaker, we will support these amendments but we will vote against the bill.

[*English*]

Hon. John Bosley (Don Valley West): Mr. Speaker, it was not my intention earlier to participate in this debate. What sparked it for me today, I guess, was that in some ways this is a special and historic day in the development of constitutional democracy. Not only are we debating this piece of legislation, as is proper, but one of the authors of the notion of supporting referenda legislation on this side of the House published a rather interesting book today. I thought at some point someone should mention that the member for Etobicoke—Lakeshore deserves a great deal of credit for his support over the years in attempting to move many of us in the direction of this form of legislation or this *genre* of legislation.

• (1900)

I read part of it this afternoon and it reminded me that he and I have debated this subject internally and privately for many years. I am sorry that members opposite who preceded me—while we are on the subject of amendments with regard to spending limits and so forth which I will come back to—think that all there is to this process or all there is to this legislation is an attempt by some to muzzle the province of Quebec. I hope they will conclude at the end of it that that is not the intention of this legislation.

Therefore, let me put it to you this way. I do not examine this legislation in the context of whether there will or will not be a referendum in the province of Quebec by Quebecers for their purposes in their absolutely legitimate right to consult themselves about what they want their future to be. Should they do that, I hope they will conclude that they want to stay in Canada.