

The Address—Mr. Maltais

dor became part of Newfoundland 30 years ago, there was a legal conflict, but very few people considered this issue important. However, in 1980, the Quebec premier is making a lot of noise to attempt to take back Labrador for its energy and mineral wealth. If Quebec separates, ten years from now will we French Canadians have to claim once again rights which have been ours in fact and in law for 300 years?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. It being six o'clock p.m., I do now leave the Chair until eight o'clock p.m.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

● (2000)

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

Mr. Maltais: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying just before the six o'clock adjournment, it is very important that Quebecers keep the country because in a few years' time we might relive exactly the same scenario as now, in which Mr. René Lévesque is trying to secure the rights to Labrador knowing full well that it belongs to Newfoundland; this is the same man who is willing to do without three-quarters of the country. I want to tell my fellow citizens of Quebec that we can change party representatives, we can change the country's administration but we must not change the country. That is important. This, in my opinion, is what we must focus on in view of the Parti Québécois' question.

We must never do away with our rights to the country. That is our priority. That, Mr. Speaker, is what every man and woman in Quebec will think about. This formerly French territory, now called Canada, had Tadoussac as its first capital and we were the first to cross this land; one can carefully read the book by Félix-Antoine Savard entitled: "La dalle des morts" to realize that there are French names all across the country, that French blood was shed all across the country. We must succeed in proving to our fellow citizens that we are welcome everywhere. I myself had the opportunity to travel from Halifax to Vancouver and I was welcomed everywhere. But of course, in Quebec as well as in English Canada, one encounters narrow-minded people, but they comprise an infinite minority.

We must look at the future. How can we unlock it? Let me tell you that what people in my age group would like is the opportunity to learn the second language easily. For a French Canadian, this means an improved educational system that would allow one to go and communicate with the people in the other part of the country, people from the west. And the same should be asked for westerners, in other words that the provincial education system allow them to learn French, in order that a meaningful dialogue can be obtained. Ultimately, this country's major tragedy may be that we never had institutions under which people could go from east to west, we never had the opportunity to study in Vancouver or Halifax. Nothing

allowed for that encounter that in my view would have developed a genuine understanding.

And here we are at this point in history mounting up a trial, whose real actors lived in Canada in the fifties. What I would ask of the Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Trudeau) is that he call, not a constitutional conclave, but a meeting of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark), the NDP leader (Mr. Broadbent), the provincial premiers, the provincial opposition leaders in order that, outside of any personal political pride, in camera, people of good will evolve, that they build the foundations of a new Canadian constitution based on the Pepin-Robarts documents. This is what young people in our age group expect.

What we are seeing now, both in English and in French Canada, is the grapes of impatience. For too long we have been limited either in a French-speaking Quebec or in English-speaking provinces. But Acadia would like to have its particular identity recognized, so would southern Ontario, northern Ontario, the St. Boniface area and Maillardville. We want in earnest to meet. Maybe the government should provide more moneys under a plan called Katimavik, give young people the opportunity to truly implement our Canadian experience. This is lacking. Instead of always brooding over the past, instead of remaining self-centred, we should think of the coming generation. That one will really be the outcome of the 1867 confederation.

I would like to quote from an article published in *Le Devoir* under the signature of André Nadeau, a young Quebec student. It goes:

I have no more desire to feed on words, whether of Marxist or nationalistic flavour. I want to read, I want knowledge to act, but first and foremost on myself, on people around me.

I do not want to change the world because all theories aimed at changing it have caused more deaths than all nuclear bombs together. To me, democracy is based on one principle: everyone controls his own life.

Social problems become more complex and wider, yes, but everyone must try to find specific answers without relating them to a system which is as theoretical as it is utopic. I cannot believe anymore that the status of women or the issues of underprivileged groups and ethnic minorities are related to the revolution. So we must pursue our fight about issues more specific than universal—

In other words, instead of great nights, let us have mornings in the sunshine and instead of a utopic future, a realistic present.

Our young people want to free themselves from the yoke of drawn out debates, they want to act, which means that this government shall find, in co-operation with opposition parties, formulas that will make self-achievement possible in our country. And if everyone had had a chance to live the Canadian experience, we would not be trying to find someone to blame but, on the contrary, to build a much stronger country.

I always like to refer to my own Manicouagan riding as we experienced that situation. I think of the Gallienne, of Jomphe,