

wait a little longer for the rest of the country to understand that what we are asking for is not special advantage but equality in the areas where we are different, we are prepared to wait if it is the price of remaining in Canada."

Mr. Speaker, what has worried me in the last week has not been the attitude of Quebec; there has not been a flare-up over separatism which Premier Bourassa has said is fairly well controlled, and I think we all agree with that. It is not even because we have been accused of selling-out our province, which is an insult which I hope is never repeated by the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) who is a tolerant and decent man, or his lieutenant, the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe (Mr. Wagner) who should know better. We have never sold-out our province on the question of federalism and we are not about to do it now. If we were to do that, we would be straining national unity because there is no answer to equality of fuel prices in this country without raising the price of fuel to the west. That is hardly a progressive policy and it is not one that we are asking for.

We are asking for two things, and I think the hon. member for Waterloo-Cambridge touched on them very eloquently. We are terrified at the growth of regionalism. It is one thing for the premier of a province to say, "This is our iron ore," if it is Quebec; "This is our potash," if it is Saskatchewan; "This is our oil," if it is Alberta; "This is ours under the constitution, but we are prepared to share it with other Canadians only if they are prepared to negotiate for what is ours". These minerals and resources are not the governments', not the premiers', but the minerals and resources of the people of Saskatchewan, the people of Alberta and the people of Quebec who are Canadians first and provincial residents second.

That has been the whole story of Canada for 100 years or more. If we had not been able to meet various crises, we would not be together today because naturally, geographically and in every other way, we should not be a country. It does not make sense economically. We get our satisfaction from the fact that we are a unique nation, a tolerant nation and one that has never had to kill in order to be a nation. These are the things that the average Canadian understands and appreciates, perhaps more than the politicians.

The threat to federalism and national unity, as I understand it, has virtually disappeared in so far as any problems are concerned about the role that French-speaking Canadians are to play in confederation. But there are new strains that should not be there—the strains caused by people who presume that they are speaking for everybody in their province when they say, "This is our energy, our mineral wealth, our iron ore and you can have a share provided you negotiate". This is the kind of talk you might get if you negotiated with the United States. But we are talking about Canadians negotiating with Canadians. If this were carried to its absurdity, we would not be a federal country; we would be a loose connection of ten different countries, some rich and some poor. This is not what we are looking for, a loose federation of ten states or countries. We are one country and we want to stay that way.

It is much more logical for the premiers of the provinces to say, "Look, we have a transportation problem and it is

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time, 100 years after confederation, that it was solved. "I can understand that. But in the next breath they say, "If you will not solve it, you will not get our oil." When the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Macdonald) describes that as blackmail, he is right.

**An hon. Member:** Who said that?

**Mr. Mackasey:** Mr. Speaker, it was said. If I wanted to, I could cut that member down in about 35 seconds but I do not have the time to waste on him. If we are going to remain as a country, we do not want to remain as ten loose states very, very loosely joined together by some sentimentality. All of us have to, as they say in French, "Put a little water in the wine". The proof of this will come at the end of January when the premiers have a chance to sit down and discuss the problems common to all Canadians and to make this a better country in which to live. If that conciliatory attitude does not prevail, then we run the risk of balkanization. But Canadians in every province—the man I mentioned in Blairmore, the logger in French Canada, the industrial worker in Ontario, the fisherman in the Atlantic provinces and the entrepreneur in the Atlantic provinces—will tell their premiers, "You may stand for balkanization, but we do not. We stand for one country, and if necessary a strong central government in this particular area".

That is the threat to confederation at the moment, Mr. Speaker—people who have illusions of grandeur and do not represent the mandate under which they were elected. We on our side must not misunderstand our role either. Our role is to be the mediator between the provinces—the have provinces and the have-not provinces—so that the solution arrived at means that everybody gains. Private industry has a chance to prosper and get a decent return on its money and thus be encouraged further to develop. If it had not been encouraged in the past to develop and explore, we would not have the oil in Alberta now. There has to be a happy balance maintained between an honest return to private industry, a fair price to the Canadian people and an understanding of what federalism is all about.

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

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● (1700)

### THE ROYAL ASSENT

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** I have the honour to inform the House that the following communication has been received:

Ottawa, December 12, 1973

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that the Honourable Wishart F. Spence, O.B.E., Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court of Canada, in his capacity as Deputy Governor General, will proceed to the