

*Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements*

ter (Mr. Trudeau) and his government are not the saviours of Confederation, but rather the saboteurs of Confederation.

**An hon. Member:** Shame!

**Mr. Wenman:** Their arrogant confrontatory tactics and abuse of power have led to a centralization of government never contemplated in the partner concept envisaged by the creators of the union of this nation.

Four thousand people responded to a questionnaire in my constituency and 80 per cent of them said that talk of separatism in several regions of Canada was really not a call for separatism as such but rather a larger concern that the government of Canada and its bureaucracy in Ottawa are too big, too much out of control, and no longer responsive to the wishes of the Canadian people. Eighty per cent felt that the real concern of Canadians is not separatism at all but rather a concern for better, smaller yet strong government. This strong western sentiment was exactly the sentiment which saw the government change in Quebec and will see a change in the national government of Canada.

I am confident in my Canadianism and I am confident in the Canadianism of my constituents. Ninety-five per cent of my constituents who responded to the questionnaire said, "Yes, I want my province or region to remain a part of Confederation in Canada." We have no doubt about our personal Canadianism in Fraser Valley West, but we feel that too much credibility has been given to non-representatives, separatists, vocal minorities.

Mr. Speaker, I want my province to remain in Canada because I am a Canadian. I believe in Canada. I believe in one, strong, united nation.

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

**Mr. Douglas Roche (Edmonton-Strathcona):** Mr. Speaker, as one considers the mathematical formulas in Bill C-37 and also the fact that the legislation is presented to us as a *fait accompli*, it is no wonder that so many speakers in this debate have sought to take a broad approach to their feelings about Confederation. It is precisely that leadership from the Canadian parliament on the crisis of Confederation at this moment in our history that the Canadian people have a right to expect. I think the Canadian people want to hear from their members of parliament how we feel, what we are going to do to save our country if we hope to hold it intact at this particular moment.

I think it is unfortunate that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has not sought to come into the House of Commons to share, the kind of views he expressed in Washington today, to come into the House of Commons and take part in a full scale debate in this House on national unity and the future of our country—a national unity which we could define for the good of the Canadian people. It is not only the threat of the break-up of Confederation and the linguistic and cultural issues that we are facing, but also we will be considering in the debate on national unity the economic problems and regional disparities of our country, because that also is what needs to be

[Mr. Wenman.]

discussed in a broad ranging debate on national unity. That is why the members of this House, as we look back in the debate of the past two days on this bill, have sought to take a wider approach. Members are tired of the great issues of our country being faced and settled in federal-provincial conferences, in TV addresses to the nation, and in speeches to the Congress of the United States. I believe it is here that we ought to be giving the leadership the Canadian people want.

We heard tonight the views of members from Newfoundland and British Columbia about the desire of people in those provinces to stay in Confederation and to respond flexibly to the threat that faces our country right now. I want to say a word about the people of Alberta. I think that not enough positive statements are being heard which truly reflect the feelings of Alberta. I must say to you, Mr. Speaker, that I deeply resent the kind of media coverage some eastern journalists have been giving Alberta when they interview people who say that we in Alberta don't care if Quebec does separate and that our future is not really on the line. I think that such views within Alberta express the feelings of only a very small fraction of the people in Alberta. The people of Alberta I come into contact with want very much to recognize that the problems posed by the November 15 election in Quebec are problems that have to be solved by all Canadians together.

I resent that great Liberal, Bryce Mackasey, going into Alberta and saying that Albertans won't pay the price, that Albertans won't pay the price for staying in Confederation, and then being interviewed on the media as if this was a great discovery which had been made and one worth relaying to the rest of the people of Canada. I think that Albertans are paying the price, and I recognize that we are going to have to go on paying a price for national unity.

I think it is absolutely unfair to depict Albertans as being narrow on this subject, even on the subject of bilingualism and biculturalism. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that people in Edmonton line up to get their children into French schools in the city of Edmonton and that there is a thriving French community in the city of Edmonton which enjoys French language television and French language radio and newspapers. Many things have been done in our province to reflect the diversity and the fullness of the Canadian character.

I think it is a calumny to say that Albertans won't pay the price for staying in Confederation when we are already paying the price in energy subsidies which we pass on to the rest of the country through our willingness to take less than world price on energy. Then these are the freight rates. The discrimination in freight rates has been documented in this House for many years.

Speaking about transportation, Mr. Speaker, we think about the decision handed down today by the Supreme Court of Canada in the Pacific Western Airlines dispute which the federal government brought through a series of actions all the way into the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court ruled by a nine to nothing decision today to uphold the province of Alberta in its acquisition of PWA. I think the action of the Alberta government in acquiring PWA for reasons which