

what is basically wrong with this country is the amending formula mechanism. This paper isn't even up to the standards of Political Science 101. Any student could have written a better paper than this. The text simply dishes up old nostrums that have been around for ages: the referendum model and the constituent assembly model.

Mr. Speaker, for many years, political observers have longed for this kind of process. However, we all know it is not part of Canada's tradition and that the present amending formula, which requires unanimity, will never be amended to allow for these alternatives.

No wonder the Prime Minister is panicking. Every time he makes a speech at a fundraiser, he has to announce a new committee. Thank goodness there aren't too many fundraisers right now, Mr. Speaker!

I think this initiative is worthy of a minor "Impro" league. He started with his so-called Spicer Commission—which is a big farce, even English Canada doesn't take it seriously, while it is completely ignored in Quebec—and now, he has just created a committee on plumbing. If any questions are asked, he might be willing to create a third committee on the division of powers and upon further questioning, he would probably appoint a fourth, fifth and even sixth committee.

Mr. Speaker, the truth is that all these committees will not prevent Quebec from going ahead. Those who look at the world through rose-coloured glasses and think it will be business as usual are wrong. I may remind the Prime Minister that in his speeches before the demise of Meech Lake, he himself referred to the last chance, the last opportunity. Today, in his attempt to resurrect old political science papers, the Prime Minister is deluding himself.

Mr. Speaker, I am willing to accept the motion by the New Democratic Party which is more honest, in my opinion, because it is more open, while the position of the leader of this party is also far more realistic.

Mr. Speaker, this committee will never be able to come to grips with reality. It will be useless.

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Government Orders

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): The hon. member for Hamilton East on a point of order.

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, we have ten minutes to ask questions to the leader of the New Democratic Party. She wants to take the opportunity to make a speech. Fine. I want to make one too, but this is a question period. So, she should give others a chance to ask questions too. After all, we are more directly concerned by this issue than she is.

[*English*]

Ms. McLaughlin: Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond briefly to the previous speaker's comments simply by saying that despite our differences I am sure that no one in the Conservative Party, in the Liberal Party, or in the New Democratic Party feels that debating Canada is a waste of time.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Paul Martin (LaSalle—Émard): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the leader of the New Democratic Party a question. I must say that I found that she missed a tremendous opportunity in her speech. I found it remarkable that she began with partisan shots, unable to put the country ahead of party. It is simply not true that the Liberals opposed this debate. The fact is there is all-party agreement to have a one-day debate and the leader might well have reflected that.

She stated very clearly that her party stands for one Canada. That is a truly remarkable statement to those of us who fought the 1988 election, when her party in Quebec came out with a vision that was clearly at odds with the rest of the country. It is certainly a remarkable statement for those of us who saw the by-election of Laurier—Sainte-Marie where her candidate, in order to garner votes in that election, turned her back on Canada and the leader of the New Democratic Party did not denounce her. It is certainly a surprise to those of us in Quebec who have heard countless times the member for Chambly take a position which is clearly at odds with the members of the rest of her party. My question to the leader is, she may stand for one Canada, why does she not tell that to the members of her party in the province of Quebec?

Ms. McLaughlin: Mr. Speaker, I am the leader of the New Democratic Party. I speak for the New Democratic