

*Government Orders*

self-government. The minister today said this is not new. I take great exception to that. Then there is the proviso in the constitutional discussions that we are not going to talk about this or adjudicate it for three years.

What I want is for someone on the government side to answer before this debate is completed how to rationalize this potential agreement which is sensitive and which is properly receiving very considered response across the country.

There is a court of appeal decision in British Columbia between Delgamuukw, who is the plaintiff, also known as Earl Muldoe, suing on his own behalf and on behalf of all the members of the Houses of Delgamuukw and Haaxw, et al, against Her Majesty the Queen in right of the province of British Columbia and the Attorney General of Canada.

In conclusion my point is this. This case which is presently before the courts is on the very issue of the inherent right of the aboriginals to self-government. How can we have ministers of the Crown say in this House or ministers at the negotiating table pretend that there is going to be a three-year moratorium on defining this issue?

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** I do apologize to the hon. member but I think in all fairness, I must at this time, tell him that his time has expired.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Louis Plamondon (Richelieu):** Madam Speaker, I will start by going along with what the previous speaker said. I greatly admired his democratic approach to us and his recognition of the reaction that the French press and French-speaking Quebecers will surely have to our being gagged by this government for wanting to express a different point of view. It is using laws or regulations to limit such a serious debate to a single day. For two years, since the Meech Lake Accord failed, this government has been telling us that it wants to save this country. It wants to come up with an acceptable proposal for Quebec. Two years later, we are still going around in circles, no further ahead but pushing forward, not to save the country but to save the face of this government and its leader. They are trying to rush through a bill without examining some 60-odd amendments that have been proposed. We are now at the second set of amendments and already debate is being cut off. That is unacceptable in a democracy.

The Prime Minister, the leader of the government, has been going around the world for two years at public expense and I would have thought that he would bring back the great democratic virtues of other governments, but no, he has only brought back manners. Is he following the example of the government of South Africa or Iran or some African dictatorship? He has brought back a new way of using our parliamentary system—

**An hon. member:** A perversion.

**Mr. Plamondon:** A perversion—to boycott debates, although they are democratic. What bothers me more, as I pointed out a while ago, is that in this debate, as the independent member from Nova Scotia who preceded me said, the government members, especially those from Quebec, are not taking a position.

As a citizen of Trois-Rivières, across from my riding, said to me the other day: What are the members for Trois-Rivières, Saint-Maurice, Champlain and Lotbinière doing? We don't see them in this debate. They get up only when they have to go to the toilet or close the window. What that person said in my riding is really something. They are so absent from the debate that one would think they are asleep. If they were to wink now, they would have to open an eye. Their constituents have some hard things to say about them.

**Mr. Lapierre:** What are the people of Jonquière saying?

**Mr. Plamondon:** I went to Jonquière which my colleague just mentioned. I would not want to see people's reaction to his statement today that Canada must be saved at any cost. Implicit in that was even if it meant suppressing basic rights and not meeting Quebec's historic demands of the past thirty years.

You know other Conservative members sat in this House, and I found out what they said. You will recall that the Liberal government in 1979, before it was defeated, also proposed a Canada-wide referendum. A slew of people in Quebec and in this House rose against it. Let us remember the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Let us also remember that there were not many Conservative members from Quebec then, but there was one very well-known and highly respected member from Joliette, Mr. LaSalle, if I may name him.

**An hon. member:** He was the only one.