

Statute Law Amendment Act

very high, in fact it is higher than the provincial and national average.

We hope this situation, which has existed for a long time in Madawaska-Victoria, is going to change, and we are confident that by electing this Government on September 4 we are now on the right track.

The people of Madawaska-Victoria have traditionally supported the Official Opposition in federal elections, and they have seen what good this has done them. Mr. Speaker, that is the context in which should be considered my election on September 4 and for which I am truly grateful to my constituents in Madawaska-Victoria. They gave a massive support to the Progressive Conservative Party at the last election and gave their confidence to a team led by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney). During my mandate and during this Parliament, I really intend to prove worthy of their confidence by discharging my responsibilities as best I can.

Mr. Speaker, after being in power for almost seven months, even if we are young and inexperienced members, we follow the proceedings in the House and we are tempted to make some comments . . . I listened carefully to the comments made by the Hon. Member for York South-Weston (Mr. Nunziata) a while ago in reply to the speech made by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Crosbie). I also heard the criticisms of my colleague, the Hon. Member for Burnaby (Mr. Robinson). Certain things were brought out in the speech made by the spokesman of the official opposition.

It is clear from their speeches since September 4 that they are frustrated after being decimated throughout the country, but when I see in this House the logic and rhetoric of the Liberal Party, I am grateful that my electors had enough wisdom to elect a member of the Progressive Conservative party. I thank the Canadian people for having elected a government which has avoided the Liberal Party rhetoric.

● (1720)

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I regret to interrupt the Hon. Member. I thought he was making his maiden speech and I did allow him a few minutes to speak about his constituency, but I must now ask him to speak on Bill C-27.

Mr. Valcourt: Mr. Speaker, that is what I am going to do. I listened with attention to the comments made by the Hon. Member for York South-Weston (Mr. Nunziata) in reply to the speech of the Hon. Minister of Justice (Mr. Crosbie) and I was saying how amazed I was at the rhetoric.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I understand. I heard the Hon. Member repeating the same thing in French. I would like him now to carry on with Bill C-27.

[Translation]

Mr. Valcourt: Of course, Mr. Speaker, Bill C-27 now being considered comes under attack by the Official Opposition and the New Democratic Party. I do not want to prolong the debate, but the Opposition is trying to prove that Bill C-27 is a very minor piece of legislation which is not quite in the same league as the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Well, Mr. Speaker, they have to admit that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms adopted in 1982 does enshrine the rights and freedoms of all Canadians and did make radical changes in our society. Courts, provincial legislatures, the Federal Government and all citizens are affected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, because the Constitution, our most basic law, acknowledges those rights in no uncertain terms.

They now claim that the Government is not doing anything. Well, none of the critics has mentioned the fact, among others, that as recently as September 14, 1984 the Supreme Court of Canada rendered a decision in the Southam-Hunter case with respect to the powers of entry and inspection provided under some federal Acts. In less than four months the Government took into consideration the principles of that decision and embodied them in Bill C-27 which contains amendments related to powers of entry and search as well as powers of entry and inspection.

As a lawyer, Mr. Speaker, I can assure my colleagues in the House that those amendments stemming from the Supreme Court of Canada decision in the Southam case are more than welcome. The critics of the Official Opposition or of the New Democratic Party can say what they like, but the fact is that the Government did not wait for years before taking action, with the result that the amendments can now be found in Bill C-27.

Mr. Speaker, I also deplore the fact that the official critic of the Liberal Party has urged all Canadians from coast to coast to boycott the hearings of the major committee duly appointed to look into the document entitled "Equity Issues in Federal Law, A discussion paper", that was recently published and tabled by the Minister of Justice. This committee, made up of representatives from the Government, the Official Opposition and the NDP, was asked to consider some truly important issues in the light of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Of course, our hon. friends from the Liberal Party will regard that as evidence of inaction and lack of leadership, claiming that the Government should put an end to its consultations and take some strong positive action. What the Official Opposition critic is saying is that we should not seek the Canadian public's views on the important issues raised in this document, including retirement, status, age of majority, sexual preferences of individuals. These critics are consistent with the philosophy of the Liberal Party which claims to be the sole possessor of all knowledge and the supreme judge of all truth