

The Constitution

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Young: We are making that constitutional package right now, we are making it here in Canada, and all agree we have that right.

In conclusion, I want to say that we in the New Democratic Party want to get on with the job. We are not prepared to sit back while the provincial governments try to make up their minds whether they want all Canadians to have the same rights, regardless of the area of Canada in which they live. We believe all Canadians should have those rights now. We will not be party to any attempt to deny the granting of those rights, which I am convinced will happen if the charter is not acted upon and dealt with now.

Mr. Ron Stewart (Simcoe South): Mr. Speaker, I rise from my seat to enter this historic constitutional debate. I am not the least bit incredulous that our Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) would perpetrate the greatest hoax, the greatest manipulation, the greatest "con" job, the greatest "snow" job ever foisted upon the citizens of this great dominion of Canada by his unilateral despotic patriation of our very precious Constitution: unilateral patriation by going over the heads of the provinces, an amending formula with veto power to Ontario and Quebec, and a charter of rights entrenched by Britons, not Canadians.

As my colleagues who spoke before, I congratulate the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) for recognizing this duplicity as early as October 2, 1980. I congratulate my colleague from Provencher (Mr. Epp) and his constitutional committee for their ongoing efforts to stop this callous manipulation by the Prime Minister and his trained anvil chorus. I love my riding of Simcoe South and my country, and I want patriation, but not dictatorship.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Stewart: Many of my colleagues have pointed out the history of this great Canada: the Quebec act of 1774, the constitutional act of 1791 and Lord Durham's report. They recognized the fact that the Quebec act and the constitutional act gave to French Canadians rights which were the most enlightened of their time. Unfortunately, no one pointed out that the Durham report recommended the union of Upper and Lower Canada and the use of one federal language, English. Had this been adhered to, we would not be having this acrimonious debate in the House today. Now we must all acquiesce to the fact that the Right Hon. Prime Minister, in his master plan, has accomplished two of the three things he set out to do in his hell-bent-for-leather gallop to take Canada to the left.

First, he made closure the order of the day, controlling this House by limiting debate through the use of Rule 75c. Next, he passed the Official Languages Act. It may not be fashion-

able to speak out against the practice—not the theory or the idealism or the goals—of bilingualism.

An hon. Member: Three parties voted for it.

Mr. Stewart: Bilingualism and biculturalism are aimed at preserving and enhancing national unity. The practice and evidence is that they have had the opposite effect. To voice opposition, skepticism or disenchantment with the contribution of bilingualism and biculturalism to the national unity is to risk being pilloried by those who are blindly and irrevocably pledged to the concept. To speak out against the headlong rush into bilingualism is, alas, to be branded a redneck, to be labelled anti-French; I am not. But I see the Official Languages Act unamendable if this piece of legislation goes through, and I see that as a great risk to unity as does the premier of my province. I would be derelict in my duty as a representative of all of the people of Simcoe South if I did not transmit the majority of their feelings and sentiments to this House. Speaking for the voters of Simcoe South, I think I also speak for that silent majority in the rest of Canada on the issue of bilingualism.

● (2050)

Over a century ago, Lord Durham wrote in his celebrated report that he found "two nations warring within the bosom of a single state". That war, unfortunately, and I say unfortunately, has continued until today. Of course, we have an Official Languages Act. But language has divided this nation. The bilingualism and biculturalism policies of this government have served only to act as an abrasive in English-speaking Canada.

Let us look at reality. The history and the experience of other nations would indicate that it is next to impossible to build a unified nation using two official languages. There must be one common language for basic communication, and in North America, whether we like it or not, figures tell us it is English. This was espoused by the hon. James Richardson, a former minister in that government, who was forced to resign. Bilingualism should be a two-way street. To me bilingualism means English language instruction opportunities for French-speaking Canadians and French-language instruction opportunities for English-speaking Canadians.

I have in my hand a copy of *Hansard* for March 2, 1981. At page 7773, the hon. member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert) asked question No. 1,934, as follows:

What is the budget for the current fiscal year of the Official Language Minority Groups Directorate of the Department of the Secretary of State and what is the (a) percentage (b) per capita allocation of this sum to each official language group?

The answer given by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State and Minister of Communications (Mr. Stollery) reads: