

*The Address—Mr. La Salle*

the present government since 1968 to have constantly and systematically refused to see in the burgeoning regionalisms some dynamic elements which promote the sense of belonging I mentioned. Its blindness and its obstinacy in fighting them led us to the present impasse which does not exist in Quebec only. In my province, the alienation has reached the point where a major part of the people are repudiating Canada as their country and want to restrict their loyalty to the birth place.

The Prime Minister cannot deny that the Quebec independence movement has made steady progress under his administration nor that his government constituted one of the most violent ferment of disintegration in the country. In Quebec the situation has become so alarming that the leader of the government party himself feels the need to speculate today on the consequences of a majority Yes vote in next Tuesday's referendum. The man who not so long ago, Mr. Speaker, proclaimed the death of separatism in Quebec now realizes how the abyss has deepened and how he has contributed to its deepening. He must be held responsible for its deterioration. Just remember how dead set he was against any demand for constitutional and administrative changes made by the team of Jean Lesage, the Johnson government and, the one led by Robert Bourassa. Nobody can deny that because of those repeated frustrations, Mr. Speaker, the lack of co-operation of the Liberal government, Mr. René Lévesque cut himself off and advocated the political independence of Quebec.

Today, the Yes side finds some new followers every day even among federalists, and if I am asked to name some, I will only mention the names of Mr. Jean-Paul L'Allier and Mr. Drummond, the former Quebec minister of agriculture. How can you explain the behaviour of those former members of a Liberal cabinet who came many times to make demands in Ottawa, begging for what are considered crumbs today. After repeated refusals by this government on apparently quite legitimate matters, after repeated frustrations, deceit after deceit, those people have decided to work on the Yes side like thousands of Quebecers, not because they want a complete separation, but because they no longer have confidence that this government will seek a renewed federalism which is now essential. They no longer rely on that kind of separatism advocated by the leader of this government. The past intransigence of the Prime Minister does not augur well for his alleged openmindedness toward a renewed federalism at which he was sneering during the last election campaign.

● (1510)

How are we to believe that the Liberal government wants to alter relations between the federal authorities and the provinces when it will not consider them as associates or partners of Ottawa and treats them as enemies, if not as enemies of the common good? The throne speech itself made thinly-veiled threats not only to the Péquiste government but also to loyal and truly Canadian governments like those of Newfoundland

and Alberta, specifically referred to in the government statement.

Instead of seeing the Canadian mosaic as an opportunity for growth and dynamism, instead of promoting the birth of a community of communities, of which the opposition leader has so eloquently spoken, the Prime Minister, since taking office, has done all he could to subdue the provinces, to consider them as nuisances, and even accuse them of undermining Canadian unity. To these dynamic communities that only want to assert themselves and take part in the social and economic progress of this country, he has shown only the cold disdain of a person who believes only he possesses the truth and the secret of ensuring the unity of this country. But we simply have to look around us to see how terribly wrong the leader of the government has been and how, instead of promoting unity, he has only contributed to further dividing this country.

The Prime Minister does not respect the letter nor the spirit of the constitution. As far as natural resources are concerned, he confuses sharing and robbery; as for constitutional reform, he does not even make a distinction between dialogue and bludgeoning. We all know where that has led us, Mr. Speaker. But the situation will only worsen if the Leader of the Government refuses to accept the obvious and continues to treat the provinces as colonies and their premiers as servants of the central government. As if inborn arrogance were not enough, the right hon. Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Trudeau) was not afraid of provoking those he should consider as his partners by appointing true agents provocateurs to key positions in his administration. Mr. Speaker, I am talking about the Minister of Justice (Mr. Chrétien) and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde). The latter I might qualify as the author of scary bogeyman stories; as to the former one can only think of the arrogance he so often displayed during the election campaign by urging Quebecers to have faith in their representatives within the federal government.

Again yesterday in Shawinigan, during a more or less serious discussion at a meeting, he quite simply promised, with the arrogance that is so characteristic of him, to give PQ supporters unemployment insurance even if the No vote wins. At what point does such arrogance become an insult to Quebecers? I am convinced that the 74 Quebec members know full well that Quebec will not be satisfied with measures that make them social welfare recipients but this is the type of answer the Minister of Justice deems fit to give in answer to our current needs.

And, as if this type of provocation were not enough, Mr. Speaker, the same government tolerates shameful speeches against the Yes voters, such as the one made by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and the Postmaster General (Mr. Ouellet) who sees PQ sympathizers everywhere. If this were true, Mr. Speaker, we should congratulate them; otherwise I cannot understand how a minister of the Crown could say these things, or make scurrilous insinuations such as