

ble means of solving them. In short, I believe everybody is aware of the need for a strong and a prosperous central government that could always reflect the glory of this nation throughout the world and make our Canadian star shine. I realize that there are not many provinces ready to participate in that to the prejudice of the new aims conceived by their governments in the interest of greater provincial prosperity, which is finally also that of the Canadian nation.

[English]

To avoid shocks, I believe revisions of our Constitution should be initiated and its study reactivated every five years, such review to last as long as required for deciding any necessary amendments. The mandatory or obligatory enactment of any approved proposals should then be required to be made a part of the Constitution itself every seven years. This should create an appropriate constant evolution of our constitutional guidelines, and it would avoid strains, even hardships in certain circumstances, on its participating members. It could equally avoid erosion of good communication and understanding between its participating members and evade provocative rigidity and intransigence in our constitutional guidelines.

The work of the Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons on the Constitution of Canada in the last few months should be commended here. Although some have debated the work of such a committee, I believe it is through this committee that Canadians as individuals, as associations, as patriotic, militant organizations, as critics, and as economists are expressing themselves and making known their views and recommendations in their own way. It is the forum of Canadians. To be sure, its great importance in this instance must be underlined, and it is even to some a buffer and a counterpart to provincial or federal governmental establishment representations.

When the committee went to Sherbrooke quite recently a small group, a very small minority of those present before the committee, created some tumult and uneasiness. As a Sherbrooker, I want here to apologize for the behaviour of that turbulent few. They did not represent anyone or any organization, nor did they offer any constructive criticism to the joint committee on the Constitution. They made no contribution to Canada, to their province, to their cause, or the joint committee. Although they had been provided there with a wonderful opportunity to express their constitutional views and their criticism in a constructive way, they refused to take advantage of these facilities to present a positive brief of what they thought their Constitution should be, and limited themselves to insulting, crude remarks and negative approaches to our problems.

Here is how a separatist commentator, using TV channel 7 in Sherbrooke, commented a few days after the disgraceful events, and it shows now how slanted their ways of thinking are:

[Translation]

How could we bring these members of Parliament and senators on this committee to realize that for a number of Quebecers they are six or eight years late? How could we tell those spokesmen for Ottawa that as soon as the first bomb exploded in Montreal they should have come to Quebecers to talk constitution? How could we tell these politicians that when the first separatist movement, the RIN, was born and when a man like Pierre Bourgault emerged, they should have visited all the towns of the province of Quebec, from the smallest to the biggest, to beg Quebecers to rewrite the Constitution? How could we tell them that on a not too distant day, Quebecers will prove to them that instead of buying time they have lost their time in constitutional conferences and that they will never be able to regain this lost time? How could we tell them all this if not by resorting to the means used by several people from Sherbrooke, Monday night last? The highlight of this meeting was undoubtedly that some people in Sherbrooke finally dared to stand up and tell the members and senators on this venerable committee that they are not engaged in amending the Constitution but rather in performing its autopsy. Those people stood up and told the venerable committee that since they had accepted the proclamation of the War Measures Act, they are not trustworthy any more. They stood up and told the members of this venerable committee that all Confederation gave them was simply poverty and unemployment and they do not want to hear any more about it; this denotes a rather rude awakening and awareness, I do not deny it, but it is indispensable if these people want to regain their dignity and their pride as men, as citizens of Sherbrooke, as Quebecers.

Finally, the cool welcome extended to the constitutional committee demonstrated that the times when we confined to the attic our poorer relatives when we had visitors from Ottawa are long gone.

[English]

On the present thinking of many Quebecers, here is what Mr. Marcel Faribault, a nationwide recognized constitutional authority, had to say recently:

It will be difficult to find elsewhere than in Canada a more flagrant and more constant violation of all the principles of federalism. It is why a new Constitution or a deeply modified Constitution must provide a new text and new institutions.

I believe we must see the real challenge to all of us who want to keep Canada intact. I do not believe we should be insincere, or delay unduly the adding of approved amendments to our Constitution. I do not believe we should be afraid of strong, basic, constructive new additions and bold objective approaches, and far-reaching changes for the betterment of our country. Many Canadians have all the wisdom and foresight to give Canada a lasting, equitable and just Constitution.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Manning debate adjourned.