

Olympic 1976 Act

treated with a little more decency and grace, in the interests of the unity of all Canadians.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Grafftey: I am sorry our amendments were defeated this morning. I am no great expert on parliamentary rules, but if somehow this debate could have gone on—perhaps I am just speaking out loud and I should not tell the House how the deficit could have been properly handled—I know the deficit could have been properly handled; that is, if our amendments had been adopted. The government's actions will be brought home to bear on the minister. He is going to be a nice guy this afternoon. He will go home and have a nice weekend. He will tell his electors that he got the coinage bill through the House. He will go on television, but he will not tell the people about the wastage of millions and millions of Canadian taxpayers' dollars which are being used in respect of this devalued coinage.

I am not a mathematician, nor am I a computer expert, but I believe that had the minister accepted the amendments, the deficit would have been reduced by \$5 million or \$6 million and the Canadian people would have been able to obtain proper value for coinage which contained the proper amount of gold. We have lost the day over here. I remember the petulant speech of the Prime Minister after he thought he had lost some of his marbles in the 1972 election.

An hon. Member: He lost them all.

Mr. Grafftey: We lost the day over here. But I should like to serve notice that from now on the government is not going to get away with this kind of attitude, in terms of what the hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi will have to say and what all decent Canadians will have to say whether they are Quebecers or are living in other parts of Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Mr. Grafftey: I am not such an avant-garde member. However, you can be sure that I remain, as you do, in contact with my fellow-citizens in Quebec. I seriously and deeply believe that the policy followed this week by the government is really obsolete and from now on, as far as national unity and the rights of the opposition are concerned, you will have to alter your attitude as well as your views for the welfare of Canada.

[*English*]

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Postmaster General): Madam Speaker, if I look bewildered it is because I had hope—and someone wiser than me once said that hope springs eternal in the human breast—that the tone set for third reading by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) would prevail for the duration of the afternoon, because to a large degree the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition and of the hon. member for High Park-Humber Valley (Mr. Jelinek) is responsible for the fact that we have the bill before us today. The hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi (Mr. Grafftey), for some unknown reason, thinks he is the only English-speaking Quebecer in the House of Commons representing a French Canadian riding. The

[*Mr. Grafftey.*]

hon. member forgets that I have been in my riding longer than he has, because I have been in the province longer than he has representing a riding which is over 85 per cent French speaking. I have done a better job in protecting national unity than the hon. gentleman has ever done.

● (1500)

On second reading and at the committee stage I had hoped we would stick closely to this bill, but now the hon. gentleman talks about chickens coming home to roost. He came home to roost a little late and is trying to defend the fact that instead of being in his place on second reading he was running up and down the country, and is just now making the speech he should have made on second reading, to no avail. He knows I am right. It is too late for the hon. member now to say he didn't mean what he said, but the fact is that he said it.

I have no lessons to take in this House or anywhere else, from the hon. gentleman on the question of national unity, and he should know that. If anybody in this House has stuck his neck out for national unity since 1962 it has been the member for Verdun, and at times I have paid for it much more dearly than that member and the jackass who is now speaking from his seat.

I could approach this bill as it should be approached on third reading and talk about the amendments, or make a political speech like the hon. member just made. The member was not here to make that speech on second reading because he was out chasing the pot at the end of the rainbow, and he will never be able to obtain it. The hon. member knows that his speech was ill-timed, ill-prepared, ill-conceived, and it was not a credit to the party he represents. He brought in the strawman of national unity in respect of the Olympics bill, when everybody who participated in this debate from second reading on until today has meticulously avoided pitting Quebec against the rest of Canada.

The first time the issue was raised was when it was raised by the hon. gentleman. All he need do is read the proceedings at second reading and the committee stage to understand the fact that, as the leader of his party quite properly suggested, this bill is a rather minor amendment to a bill which had been discussed fully and improved by amendment when first brought to this House. In case there is any doubt in the hon. member's mind, I made our position very clear. I might say that the hon. member for High Park-Humber Valley (Mr. Jelinek), who is the official spokesman for the Olympics when the hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens) permits him, has always stood for the Olympics.

Mr. Grafftey: I rise on a point of order, Madam Speaker. The Postmaster General (Mr. Mackasey) has reflected on my speech and I feel I must reply. I could only speak on third reading once it became evident to me that the government was going to defeat an amendment I thought had received agreement.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Prud'homme: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The point raised by the hon. member was not a point of order.