

Oral Questions

Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, of course it is a fundamental Canadian question and that is why this party has been pressing to make sure that all Canadians are involved: aboriginal Canadians, Quebecers, and the multicultural community.

But I say to the Prime Minister that the worst thing—and I know it is not the Prime Minister's wish or this government's wish even—for this country would be to see a Meech Lake II where the door is slammed on Canadians as other negotiations were going without the involvement or open knowledge so that everyone could participate in it.

His deputy ministers are working on reports. That is fine. There are other meetings going on. Apparently there are some talks about a referendum. We hear about one-to-one negotiations. Canadians do not want a sequel to Meech Lake, they want renewal. Will the Prime Minister be open with Canadians about all of the closed door initiatives as well as the open processes, the commission that we know is going on, and be honest with Canadians about the initiatives he is taking?

Mr. Speaker: I am sure that the hon. member meant would the Prime Minister be frank, but I think that we should watch our language in this very carefully.

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I will be happy to accept from my hon. friend any useful and constructive suggestions that she may have either in regard to procedure or in regard to substance. I have already indicated that—because the leader of the NDP has talked about the desire and the importance of listening to Canadians—we established the Spicer commission precisely so that it could listen to ordinary Canadians and it is in the process of doing that.

One of the matters that became very clear, beginning with the aboriginal processes in 1985 and 1986, and then in Meech Lake, was the flaw in the amending process. We have established a committee that is presently supported by members of her party in the process of looking for ways to correct the amending process.

Both of these reports, one listening to ordinary Canadians, another seeking to unblock the amending process, would be major contributions to putting forward the substance of constitutional reform.

The House leader and I have indicated that it is our intention at the earliest possible moment to create a committee that will involve all of the parliamentarians in putting this together on behalf of all Canadians. As soon as it is done, I will be inviting the member either to participate or to designate participation, but also to give us her ideas on how best this can be done.

There has been a lot of criticism of Meech Lake by my hon. friend. I would simply remind her that we are all great Monday morning quarterbacks, and her party supported Meech Lake all the way through.

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BELANGER-CAMPEAU COMMISSION

Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast): My question is also for the Prime Minister.

He said yesterday that he gave no instructions to the Conservative member on the Belanger-Campeau commission as to how to vote on Monday on the question of a referendum in Quebec.

Many residents of this single great nation would like to know why the Conservative member on that commission was not told to vote against an early referendum. Will the Prime Minister tell us?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I answered that completely yesterday in both English and French.

[*Translation*]

Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is directed to the Prime Minister. Is the Government of Canada's position on the referendum a matter that interests all Canadians? Is the Government of Canada in favour of a referendum of Quebec's sovereignty, even in June 1992? Could he tell us something more substantial than he did yesterday?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the question is so juvenile and hypothetical it doesn't deserve an answer.

[*English*]

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Prime Minister. Yesterday in the House the Prime Minister said, as reported at page 19019 of *Hansard*: