

Interim Supply

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Chairman, I can tell the hon. gentlemen opposite that if they ever hope to get back in office again they will have a great deal more chance with him as leader than with the kind of leadership they are getting now.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Rhéaume: Tell us about your leadership.

Mr. Pickersgill: All I want to do, sir—

Mr. Rhéaume: Where is the UN-man?

Mr. Pickersgill: I apologize again for taking any time at all. I want to read from the *Montreal Star* of Thursday, October 15, a Canadian Press dispatch from Kamloops, British Columbia, dated October 15. It reads as follows:

E. Davie Fulton, former Conservative justice minister, said today he is "extremely pleased" with the federal-provincial agreement on a formula for amending Canada's constitution.

"I welcome the agreement on the constitution-amending formula as a major achievement of Canadians in gaining custody and control of our own constitution", Mr. Fulton said in a telephone interview from his home.

"The fact that it has taken such a short time to reach agreement since discussions were resumed is a conclusive indication that the formula we worked out in 1960 and 1961 was a satisfactory basis for action", said Mr. Fulton, now British Columbia Progressive Conservative leader.

I think all of us know that Mr. Fulton was a good lawyer and an honest man—

Mr. Rhéaume: How would you recognize that?

Mr. Pickersgill: —and we are not ashamed of the fact that we built on the foundation that he laid when he was minister. But we are astonished when that foundation is attacked by the man who was the head of the government when it was laid; the man who is now misrepresenting and denigrating the work that his own government did, and is repudiating one of the very few achievements he had when he was prime minister of this country.

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Chairman, in one way I agree with what has been said by the last speaker and the speaker who preceded him; that is that the matter of very great importance has been introduced into this debate in connection with our discussion at this time of the interim supply motion. I have no hesitation in saying that in my opinion it is completely in order, and I follow without any hesitation the example of the Minister of Transport who also addressed himself to the matter.

I think the subject is important because at some time in the not too distant future the proposed amendments to the British North America Act in the form of an address will be introduced, and it is most desirable that there should be the fullest exploration, discussion and debate of the matter not only in this house but in the country at large, so that when the government comes to take the responsibility for bringing these matters before parliament and seeking the approval of the United Kingdom parliament they may be assisted by what has been said here and will be said throughout the country.

For this to happen I think it is necessary to initiate the discussion now and, as I say, I have no hesitation in taking part in the debate at this time. And I hope others will do so. I also hope that ministers of the crown will take part in the debate and will make some defence of the proposals, if defences are available. Any time spent at this stage would, I am sure, be of the utmost benefit to the house and to the country.

I do not propose to involve myself—I do not think I need to—in the discussion as to whether the proposed amendments which have been tabled and of which we are in possession are the same as those which were labelled as the so-called Fulton formula. As far as I am concerned I do not think that matters. My own personal view is that there are many aspects of them which I do not like. I know nothing as to the details of the proposals made in 1961. If they had been produced in 1961 or in 1962 I would have been opposed to them then as I am opposed to them now.

Mr. Pickersgill: Would the hon. gentleman permit me to ask him a question. The hon. gentleman said "if they had been disclosed in 1961". I am sure the hon. gentleman has not forgotten that they were disclosed and published and circulated by the government which he supported at that time, and they were well known throughout the country.

Mr. Baldwin: Let me put it this way. If they had been disclosed to the point of being introduced into the house and had been the subject of debate in which I could have participated, then I would have opposed them. As far as disclosure is concerned, the generality of the proposals might have been available, but I say quite categorically that if the details in the form they are now in had been before the house and available for debate, my position then would have been precisely the same as it is now; that the dangerous pitfalls