

Adjournment Debate

tion of the Quebec government in the Federal-Provincial Conference on Tourism. The minister confirmed that the Quebec government had refused to take part in a conference organized to discuss a national policy on tourism which had taken two years to develop and had been requested by the industry and all Canadian provinces. This refusal followed a decision made by the leader of the Parti Québécois on November 9 of this year, by which all departments were forbidden to take part in Canadian federal-provincial conferences. At the Department of Agriculture, officials refused to take part in the symposium organized with the provinces here in Ottawa. The Conference on the Status of Women in Vancouver was boycotted by the Quebec government. The Conference of Justice Ministers was also boycotted because it was a federal-provincial conference.

Mr. Speaker, this evening, my question, which consists of two parts, is directed to the minister. First, what has been the impact on Quebecers of the partisan attitude of the leader of the Parti Québécois, who is acting as the leader of his party rather than as the Premier of a responsible government elected to govern all Quebecers?

Second, and I hope my colleagues are listening, how long, Mr. Speaker, are Quebecers going to stand for this kind of attitude from their government? How long are Quebecers going to be deprived of federal-provincial conferences that are attended by all other ministers? How long are we going to be isolated and are we going to put up with the consequences of this decision? How long are the people of Quebec going to be the hostages of a separatist, independentist and sovereignist philosophy? The results are already apparent. Looking at *La Presse* of December 5, 1981, we see that Quebec lost 67,000 jobs this year, while the number of jobs in Ontario rose by 114,000. Mr. Speaker, we were not isolating Quebec when the government decided to expand the aeronautics industry and created 7,500 jobs in Quebec. Considerable progress was also made when Bombardier was given a grant of \$150 million to develop urban transport in Mexico. We have not isolated Quebec, and the Quebec members here in Ottawa do not intend to take Quebec as hostage, but the leader of the Parti Québécois seems to be eager to do so. Mr. Speaker, it seems that yesterday, Mr. Lévesque decided to call on the Parti Québécois and its militants to decide whether he should remain as leader of the party.

He asked for a referendum within his separatist clan. Mr. Speaker, tonight I want to ask the Premier of Quebec to hold a referendum for all Quebecers, to find out whether they agree that Quebec should continue to be left out of all these federal-provincial conferences. Are Quebecers prepared to pay the very considerable price of such a decision? A referendum is necessary, Mr. Speaker, so that the premier can tell us exactly when and how he intends to develop a socioeconomic policy that will make us proud to be Quebecers within a federal structure. We cannot go on accepting this attitude, although Mr. Lévesque, who is acting as the leader of a political party

while agreeing to bear the responsibilities of a premier, was elected to administer a province and to administer the socioeconomic interests of all Quebecers. What right does Mr. Lévesque have to keep Quebec civil servants from coming here to exchange views with Canadian public servants on the subject of agriculture? Think of the many developments in agricultural technology that have taken place in the past few years! What right does Mr. Lévesque have to forbid civil servants to come and discuss a national tourism policy and what right does he have to forbid the civil service to take part in an exchange in views? On what does his government base its legitimacy.

I could not sit still before such a near catastrophic situation as concerns employment in Quebec, where 67,000 jobs were lost while 114,000 jobs were created in Ontario during the same period. The Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) said at a meeting in Montreal yesterday that the Parti Québécois has helped the privileged members of the public and parapublic sectors at the expense of the workers and the private sector. I would therefore like to ask the minister what have been the consequences of such an attitude.

Mr. Claude Tessier (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, if I wanted to reply fully to this question, I would have to speak even longer than the hon. member, but I shall try to limit my answer to the non-participation of Quebec in the federal-provincial conference of tourism ministers this week and to complete the reply given by the Minister of State for Small Businesses and Tourism (Mr. Lapointe).

First, as we have seen, the Quebec National Assembly, through the Minister of Agriculture, said that agriculture was not an economic concern for Quebec. It is therefore not surprising to be told today that this conference on tourism is not important for tourism. As everyone knows, Mr. Lévesque has his own concept of Quebec and its economy, and if history repeats itself as on the issue of independence, he has the time and the means to lead Quebec to bankruptcy. I therefore share the disappointment of the hon. member for Laval (Mr. Roy) and, like him, I deplore the absence of Quebec, which shows a lack of understanding of the economic importance of tourism in Canada, and especially in Quebec. It is indeed a vital industry for the whole country, being as it is the source of more than \$15 billion in annual revenues for Canada, that is 5 per cent of its gross national product, 1.1 million jobs for Canadians in over 100,000 businesses and \$6 billion in tax revenues for all levels of government. Besides being essential that industry is therefore necessary for Quebec and Quebecers alike.

But for anyone who does not want Canada to have a future and would rather see Quebec out of Confederation it is obviously necessary to break away from the various economic levers and, once again, Mr. Lévesque must hoodwink Quebecers in an attempt to promote his argument. Unfortunately, it is