

*The Address—Mr. Trudeau*

election of the Péquiste government, we see that unemployment increased by 10 per cent in Canada, by 20 per cent in Quebec and by 30 per cent in Montreal.

If we compare the third quarter of 1976 with the corresponding quarter of 1977, we find that the growth rate of unemployment in the province of Quebec, about 80 per cent, occurred in Montreal.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, an act such as Bill 101, a mentality such as that of the Péquiste government cannot but be detrimental to the industrial development of the province of Quebec. Montreal is cut out to be a transshipment center, an industrial city, a service center, a financial, banking and management service center. So, when you start telling people who want to come to work in such a management, banking or corporate center, that their children will not be allowed to attend English schools, then it is clear that one of the main callings of that great city vanishes. Clearly, such a stand can only lead to economic stagnation. That is why I say that, in the case of Bill 101, it might not be a bad idea for Quebecers to have a chance to reflect on the qualities, on the harmful aspects of that measure.

One word only to complete the picture from the point of view of our strategy. So, we say: the Péquiste government is dividing the provincial electors; so it will have to go. What are the tools available to that government? Well, that government will have to hold provincial elections, as well as a referendum.

On this side of the House, we want the very same tools. Being able to meet the PQ on as favourable a federalist ground as they want a separatist ground. That is why I believe when the next federal elections are called, all parties in this House will campaign for national unity. In that regard, there will be no problem whatsoever. But we too, during this session, would like to have a legislation on referendum so that the federal government may also appeal to the people of Canada, and Quebec in particular.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Trudeau:** I hope that in that field we will get the cooperation of opposition parties. Naturally, in due time, we will give them the specifics of the referendum. For the time being, we only want to advise Canadians that we do not want to be taken aback by this PQ instrument called the referendum. It is really a plebiscite, but the PQ are talking about a referendum. We also want a similar instrument. We want the federal government to be able to consult the Canadian people, the population of all provinces on a certain amount of problems affecting national unity. Those who claim that the problem of the independence of Quebec only concerns the people of Quebec are like the surgeon who would tell a patient who is going to have his arm amputated: well, I am going to amputate your arm without consulting you because once it is cut it will no longer be part of the body.

We also look at separatism in a similar manner. We believe that we cannot take such an essential part of Canada as the province of Quebec from Canada without the whole nation

[Mr. Trudeau.]

being concerned. Once again, this is the reason why we are going to put before the House a referendum proposal.

In brief, Mr. Speaker, you have before you a government which is not rigid, which does not seek confrontation, which says that everything is possible and which proposed in September to the provinces a constitutional arrangement which would meet the objective sought out by all the premiers at the historical conference in St. Andrews.

Now, in brief we are going to discuss whatever subject we wish on this side and on the other side of the House, whatever subject the provinces wish to discuss; as a matter of fact, only one subject is excluded, namely a proposal which would attempt to break up, to destroy Canada; we are not willing to sit down and discuss that.

● (1742)

[English]

I apologize to the House for the length of my remarks. It is often said that I do not speak enough in the House of Commons.

**Mr. Broadbent:** We won't say that again.

**Mr. Trudeau:** But I did want to make this point at some length—

**An hon. Member:** You did.

**Mr. Trudeau:** —because I feel it is important not only for opposition members but for the country to understand the basis upon which they would have to make some very fundamental choices in the economic area and in the area of national unity.

I confess I am somewhat mystified by the fact that in the past few years Canadians seem to have lost a sense of perspective about the country. They seem to look more often at what is wrong with the country than what is right with it. We have demonstrated an amazing capacity to close our eyes to the great things which exist in this country, to the human achievements, to the privileges which our freedom and wealth confer upon us. So many seem willing to see only the supposed injustices inflicted upon us, and forget to realize that in many countries what we describe as our problems would be regarded as unattainable luxuries by nine-tenths of the population.

I have attempted today to show that we will not close our eyes to the real problems we face. I attempted to do what Canadians did 110 years ago when they created confederation. They did not close their eyes to the inequities which existed in the country, to the tension which existed between the different colonies, the disadvantages which the various native peoples faced. They did not ignore potential future conflicts, but they did realize that by uniting themselves they could be strong and could resolve those conflicts.

The Fathers of Confederation could have decided, just as Canadians could decide today, to do nothing but to let these problems overwhelm them, to let inertia condemn them to continue their isolation and to miss the opportunities open to