

The Constitution

toward anyone, whatever the people across the aisle or the separatists in Quebec may say. I urge the people of Canada to pay very close attention to everything that has been or will be said in this House about the constitution and to everything that has been or will be written on the subject because some day Canadians will have to make a decision either in an election or in a referendum. I said a moment ago that the absolute very seldom exists, but something which is absolute, Mr. Speaker, is my full support, my unconditional devotion for my leader the Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Trudeau) and for the Minister of Justice (Mr. Chrétien). When this debate has become a thing of the past, I want my descendants and the children of my descendants to be governed by Canadians under a Canadian statute, a legislation and a constitution of our own.

Mr. Speaker, nowhere else in the world do we see such an effort to have a country's constitution taken out of alien hands. Nowhere else do we witness elected representatives, seven provincial premiers and the Progressive Conservative opposition in this House fight so strongly against patriation of the constitution as it is now proposed. The point to remember, Mr. Speaker, is that if their efforts and their tactics are successful, perhaps I will never get to see that and other hon. members will never get to see that constitution.

Mr. Speaker, I remain confident still, I believe I have the same confidence felt by Mr. Pearson and all hon. members during the flag debate, the flag which we are so proud of today. When we look at it we can say with pride that it is Canadian, it is ours, and that brings warmth to our heart.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker, since the beginning of this debate I have heard a lot of discouraging words on the opposite side, words which say the resolution is a dangerous document, words about destruction of partnership, threat to the unity and health of this country, personal attacks against the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and attacks on bilingualism and the French fact. What makes those members so right and us, Liberal and NDP members who favour the resolution, so wrong? Why do those members call the Liberals the oppressors, and through you, Mr. Speaker, call the Conservative members the great defenders of democracy in this House?

I have here in my hand a letter from one of the Tory members.

May I call it six o'clock, sir?

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. It being six o'clock, I do now leave the chair until 8 p.m.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. With the consent of the House, I shall take this opportunity to inform the hon. members that pursuant to the Order of the House made on Wednesday, April 8, 1981, the Clerk of the House has received from the House leaders of the Progressive Conservative Party, the New Democratic Party and the government notices of amendments which will be printed in tomorrow's Order Paper. The Order states that these amendment are deemed to have been moved and they can therefore be debated immediately.

I understand that the members who have already taken part in the debate can now speak again about the amendments if they are recognized by the Chair.

When the House rose at six o'clock, the hon. member for Gatineau had the floor.

[*English*]

Mr. Cousineau: Mr. Speaker, at six o'clock I was saying that I had received a letter from an hon. member of this House. I do not intend to read it all but I should like to read part of it. I am sorry to say that I do not think members of the opposition received the letter from their colleague, because it was sent to the Liberal caucus and senators. The letter says, in part that "A sheep-like loyalty from his followers was all that Adolph Hitler needed to seize power in the 1930s. Please don't tell me that it couldn't happen here." That letter was on notepaper headed "House of Commons, Canada". The comparison it made was to one of the greatest murderers that mankind has ever produced. I do not think this sort of thing has any place on Parliament Hill, Mr. Speaker. I am quite sure that many members on the other side feel the same way, deep down in their hearts.

After I received the letter, I asked the member concerned if he agreed with everything he had signed and he said, "I honestly believe in what I said in that letter". I answered that that was just too bad in the circumstances.

I heard some speeches in this House a couple of weeks ago. One in particular was made by the hon. member for Edmonton East (Mr. Yurko) who spoke in favour of the resolution but made no personal attacks on anybody. A member of the NDP spoke against the resolution but made no personal attacks. One of my colleagues, a Liberal, also spoke against the resolution but did not draw any comparison with Soviet Russia and made no mention of Adolph Hitler. Those were true, honest and sincere opinions and that is what we want to hear in this House. I respect those hon. members. That was Parliament at its best, with an expression of opinions.

Is it dangerous to think of preserving and reinforcing the human rights of Canadians? Is it dangerous to try and find an amending formula? Is it dangerous to talk about equalization? Is that the destruction of partnership? Is it destructive to permit any Canadian to continue his education in English in