

it is my view that they will have to make up their minds today and in the coming days, yes, they will have to decide what kind of country they want exactly. Because, all in all, that is the question.

For us those debates are not easy ones. No one would claim this is an easy debate. I am sitting here on this side of the House with 200 other Members, and for us in our party, those were not always easy matters. We will be frank, since this is the time to be frank.

Moreover, I know that in the New Democratic Party it has not always been an easy debate either. But in politics, there are things that are acceptable and others that are not. I will tell you one thing that is not acceptable, and that is refusing to take a position. Mr. Speaker, we were elected to make decisions, good or bad, and we must take positions. And each one of us has a basic obligation to the Canadian voters at large and to our own constituents. It is an obligation to speak out and say, as elected representatives, on which side of the fence we stand. If you vote for me, I will do this or that, or I will certainly not do this or that. That is the minimum obligation for all politicians whatever their political stripes. Mr. Speaker, there is nothing so cowardly for a political party or a Leader to say: I abstain. That is acting cowardly indeed. And the most glaring act of cowardice I have ever witnessed since I became involved in politics was the behaviour of the Federal Liberal Party of Canada within the Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons when it declared itself in favour of abstaining. In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, it would be difficult to forgive a political party for behaving in such a reprehensible way.

As you know, it is possible to make mistakes. But for a political party to say that it is abstaining for reasons of expediency is outright unacceptable.

Moreover, they said: We are going to move amendments the effect of which will be to cancel the Meech Lake Accord; then we will vote in favour of the Meech Lake Accord. Then, they turn around and say that, when the time comes for the next federal election, their party platform will include the amendments they are suggesting today, the effect of which would be to cancel the Meech Lake Accord. Well, we will see. That is what you are saying. I should like to see the Members of the Liberal Party of Canada generally, and especially those from Quebec, stand up and confess that openly, as their Leader did on *The Journal* television program. Because that is exactly what he said!

Well, you had an opportunity to declare yourself in favour of Quebec joining Confederation and you let it pass. Now, Mr. Speaker, we will be able to see who are those among that party who will have the individual fortitude to stand up for Quebec and Canada!

Statue of Monarch

• (1350)

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I will give the Hon. Member for Trinity (Miss Nicholson) 30 seconds and the same to the Minister. Debate must end at two o'clock.

Miss Nicholson (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, I was rising in debate, not to ask a question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It being two o'clock the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

Mr. Cassidy: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. When I agreed to the extension requested by the Minister, I did not realize my colleague from St. John's East had been seeking to make a short comment on his speech. Perhaps the House would agree to that before we call it two o'clock.

Some Hon. Members: No.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: There is not unanimous consent.

• (1400)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS--MOTIONS

[English]

PARLIAMENT HILL

PROPOSED ERECTION OF STATUE OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Mr. Bill Tupper (Nepean—Carleton) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of commissioning the structure of a statue of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, to be placed on Parliament Hill in commemoration of the thirty-fifth anniversary of Her ascension to the Throne.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am delighted this afternoon to rise in the House and speak in support of the motion. I hope that in the time available to me I will be able to persuade you and my colleagues on the merit of this motion.

Before attempting to make the case for the motion before us, I want to express my appreciation for advice, encouragement and material which I have received from William A. Smy, a constituent in Nepean—Carleton, from Albert Bousfield, editor of *Monarchy Canada*, the Monarchist League of Canada, the Royal Canadian Legion, the United Empire Loyalists, the endorsement of a very significant number of municipalities and the encouragement of many members of this and the other place who have written to me in support of this motion. I welcome that. I acknowledge that I incorporate many of their comments into my presentation this afternoon.

In particular, I welcome the support of the Minister of Public Works (Mr. McInnes) who has indicated that Members might wish to consider marking this event. He stated in a letter