

Government Orders

Those things are hurting this country. Those things are Balkanizing Canada. The government had better wake up and smell the coffee in terms of that reality. We have never had a federal government and a federal Prime Minister who have been so unpopular as they are today. They are unpopular because of the way they have handled the Constitution, because of the GST and the divisiveness of that tax, because of the trade deal, and because of what they are doing to our national institutions.

It is about time that someone started to speak for Canada in this country. It should be the Parliament of Canada, this institution, that speaks for Canada.

When we look at the prospects today, they have probably never been as dim for this country, so it is about time we get our act together as federal parliamentarians and start standing up for what is good about Canada and pulling ourselves together rather than tearing us apart. It is easy to take cheap shots at so and so and such and such a party. There are differences in every federal political party in this country. I have my Liberal friend from Newfoundland saying look at so and so in the NDP. Look at all the people in the Liberal Party. There are all kinds of Liberals that have diverse views. There are many Liberals in Mr. Bourassa's government who have all kinds of diverse views.

• (1630)

[Translation]

A lot of people in the Liberal Party of Mr. Bourassa are in favour of Quebec sovereignty or of Quebec independence yet they stay in the Liberal Party.

[English]

If we are going to start playing those kinds of games and having the federalists in this country divide off one against the other and fight off one against the other and making a partisan issue out of the future of Canada, then there is not much future for this country. I say that to my friend of the Liberal Party from Newfoundland.

In conclusion, we have to stand up for this country. For me Canada is not on the table, is not negotiable, is not for sale. This country must stand together. The way to unite and keep it one country is to recognize our diversity, our uniqueness and to build on that diversity

and that uniqueness and make this an even greater country in the years that lie ahead.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Western Arctic—Land Claims; the hon. member for Surrey North—Medicare; the hon. member for Malpeque—Financial Institutions.

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River): Mr. Speaker, I would just like to thank the hon. member for his comments and ask him a question or two.

I notice in my travels across the country that there is enormous confusion. Last spring when we were going through the pain of the Meech Lake Accord, the Charest commission was set up and people wondered what that was going to accomplish. It came and it peaked and since then it has disappeared completely.

At the beginning of November the Spicer commission was set up, and I think people are wondering what it is going to accomplish. Now, just a matter of weeks later, we see the Prime Minister announcing that there is going to be a joint Senate and Commons committee to try to determine the amending formula.

I think people right across the country are asking, what is to be accomplished by all these things? The hon. member has clearly brought that to the forefront, that people are definitely concerned and there is an enormous amount of confusion across the country.

People are feeling adrift about our constitutional situation. I believe that not only are people right across the country concerned, but I am wondering perhaps if the government itself is adrift in its own idea of constitutional matters, not knowing exactly which way to turn, and of course fearing that it will maybe widen the divisions within its own caucus.

I was wondering about this discussion paper, was it shared even with the Tory members? The hon. member mentioned that it was not shared with the opposition. I wonder if this was a surprise announcement perhaps at a fund raising dinner recently by the Prime Minister. Was his own caucus aware of it? Did they have a chance to discuss it fully and know what was in it, or was the Prime Minister acting unilaterally in coming forward with this?