

ment over the years. Exactly what kind of work are we talking about?

Since you want to hear about it, let us set aside the traditional legitimate demands of the French-speaking majority in Quebec; let us set aside all these demands to take a closer look at the sorry, obscure role that the leading lights in this government played in our recent history. When did relations become most embittered in Canada?

Remember the reign of Pierre Elliott Trudeau. Remember that period of very great centralization when the Prime Minister, obviously, decided that his conception of Canada, which was supported by his colleagues, was a country where power had to be centralized and the provinces were only secondary.

Do you want to know one of the major problems which explains our presence here in this House today debating a motion in which it is clear that the Deputy Prime Minister's great beautiful Canada is breaking up? One of the main reasons is the odious centralizing attitude that ignores the French fact which Prime Minister Trudeau had in a recent past.

•(1600)

Madam Speaker, I will remind you that in other circumstances it was possible to think that in this would-be ideal Canada there would be room for Quebec, a proper decent place for Quebec. But I tell you it always happened when the voters had gotten rid of a Liberal government. Whenever Canada was governed by the Liberal Party in our recent history, there has been no political peace. The people who are crying today, trying to tell us what a shame it is that the separatists are in this House—who were democratically elected, we must say—what a pity it is that these people offer a different political position from their own.

You must be blind not to see the frightful role played by successive Liberal governments in this Parliament which denied the very existence of the French fact in Quebec. These governments always strove for centralization, which is no longer acceptable in Quebec. Is that clear? Quebec no longer accepts the centralizing attitude that those people believe in.

You remember the Meech Lake Accord; everyone does. This was an extremely important political moment for Quebec. Yes, Quebecers gave Canada a last chance for a face-lift. Yes, Quebecers successfully negotiated minimum conditions with the other provinces, the other regions of Canada and the federal government. It cannot be denied that all Quebecers made a tremendous effort to accept the five conditions behind the Meech Lake Accord. Even the premiers, may I remind you, undertook to convince their respective provinces that these demands were acceptable.

### Supply

What are these demands? Recognition of Quebec as a distinct society and of Quebec's National Assembly's role in promoting this distinctiveness. Was it surprising, outrageous, odious to ask that Quebec francophones, who form a people, be recognized as a distinct society? I think it is a basic requirement.

Recognition of the federal government's spending power but with the right to opt out and full compensation for the provinces because the central government's unfortunate tendency to invade areas of provincial jurisdiction had to be contained to prevent this society from expressing itself as it saw fit in the future.

Quebec's participation in the appointment of three civil-law judges to the Supreme Court; entrenchment of the Cullen-Couture Agreement in the Constitution, that is, Quebec's power to control its immigration and to protect the very nature of the Quebec people; the provinces' unanimous agreement to reform some federal institutions. Everyone in Quebec as well as many people in English Canada thought these demands were quite acceptable. They were very minimal but they at least made a dialogue possible.

Do you know what made the premiers go back on their word? Let us look at those mainly responsible for the failure of the last great historic opportunity to achieve this wonderful Canada described by the Deputy Prime Minister.

•(1605)

Do you remember someone called Clyde Wells? He does not belong to the Bloc, the Parti Quebecois or the Reform Party. Clyde Wells is a Liberal, Madam Speaker, just like the Liberals opposite.

Do you know Mr. McKenna? McKenna is neither a Bloquiste nor a Reformer but a Liberal.

Do you remember Sharon Carstairs? She was not a member of the government but what role did she play in making the Meech Lake Accord impossible to accept? Ms. Carstairs was not a Tory, a Bloquiste, a Pequist or a Reformer; she was another Liberal.

Finally, Madam Speaker, we all remember the extraordinary role played by the hon. member for Churchill, also a Liberal, who resorted to technicalities to ensure that the Meech Lake Accord would not be accepted in his province.

Those are the people who played a major role in the failure of the Meech Lake Accord. Those are Liberals who, on the evening of the Meech failure, the evening of the Liberal convention, hugged the current leader of the party and Prime Minister. Those are the ones to blame. Those people, who prevented the ratification of the five conditions deemed acceptable by all the parties involved for Canada to continue to be a viable option, are the