

*Government Orders*

25 per cent of the seats in the House of Commons, and I even saw Quebec members of the Liberal Party vote against the motion.

I saw the hon. member for Brome—Missisquoi, the newly elected member, the other guy's brother, rise in the House to say he was against guaranteeing 25 per cent of the seats in the House of Commons. I saw the Minister of Finance and member for LaSalle—Émard rise in the House to vote against guaranteeing Quebec 25 per cent of the seats in the House of Commons. This is a man who represents Quebecers, Madam Speaker, and he rose in the House to vote against this guarantee of representation in the House of Commons.

So it should come as no surprise to see one of the main pillars of the preservation and renewal of Quebec culture, our education system, bludgeoned in this way, and I am referring to the possibility that national standards will be imposed and that decisions will be made elsewhere on the orientation, content and objectives of our education. I am no longer surprised. Nothing would surprise me in this Parliament. Nothing would surprise me, coming from this Liberal government and its few distinguished members from Quebec.

It is a disgrace. I felt sick to my stomach this week when I saw that. I had the same feeling I did last week, when I saw a member from Manitoba speak out against revoking the conviction of Louis Riel for high treason. This was hard to stomach, especially from a member for the same riding Louis Riel represented before he was hanged for high treason. What is going on here? I knew, and we could tell from the outside before we were elected, and now we can see it firsthand. What is happening here is a disgrace, a patent denial of our history, and again, this refusal to make amends for certain historic facts that are a disgrace to Canada and Canadian federalism.

They tell us: Do not worry, national standards will be negotiable. It does not say anywhere in this bill that national standards will require unanimity or a consensus among the provinces. The federal government reserves the right to apply them whether the provinces agree or not. Here, the old guard is up to its old tricks: the current Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Human Resources Development were all there in the previous Liberal government. They are up to their old tricks of wanting to tell the provinces what to do and arrogantly imposing a centralist vision on all Canadian provinces, including one province they feel is just like the others, and they say that right here, and I am of course referring to Quebec.

It is the same gang that misled us in 1980, when those federalist members, now ministers, were out on the hustings. One is now Prime Minister. They went around saying: If you vote no in the referendum on sovereignty, it will be a yes to renewed federalism, yes to decentralization and yes to flexibility. A year later, they literally shunted Quebec and the Premier

of Quebec and Quebec's aspirations aside, saying: We have an agreement, the federal government has an agreement with the other Canadian provinces, and Quebec will have to go along. That is happening now with a very ordinary bill to implement certain provisions of the budget of the Minister of Finance.

• (1100)

The old gang, the one responsible for the show of force in 1981, patriated the constitution. We have to keep saying this. We tend to forget what happened. Despite the near unanimous decision of the Quebec legislature, the Liberal government of the time patriated the constitution. This was the government of Mr. Trudeau, who is no longer a member here, and his acolytes—the present Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Human Resources Development and others. The Liberal government, at that time, also ensured Quebec's exclusion. I tell you I see the hand of the old gang in this bill. This is the gang that is telling Quebec: "Forget your nationalist and sovereigntist claims, that is all over, you are going to be included. You will have to bend and we will make you bend", to the delight of the Reform Party members.

The government's objective with regard to transfer payments to the provinces is clear. The government presented things clearly too. It wanted to avoid having to make difficult decisions this year, because, with the Quebec referendum, it would mean revealing the failure of the federal system. Furthermore, it wanted to try and minimize the impact of cuts in social assistance, post-secondary education and health care transfers to the provinces. These cuts are serious.

The government, and its Minister of Finance, is an old hand at deception, illusion and hypocrisy. It managed to leave the impression that these cuts would hurt neither Canadians nor Quebecers. It managed to do what it wanted. Things this year do not look too bad, really. However, for next year, it covered up the fact that everyone is going to have to pay and that it is going to be tough and will keep on being tough. It will keep on being tough until 2050, because the system is outdated and does not work anymore.

I will tell you that the shortfall the Quebec government will be facing in the next few years is equivalent to the operating budgets of all of the hospitals in Quebec, except those in Montreal and Quebec City. This is a considerable amount. The money to operate all the hospitals in the outlying regions, that is what the federal government is cutting from its transfers to the provinces.

In other words, in this budget, with regard to transfers, the federal government is making Quebec and the other provinces shoulder the offensive part of the reform, which the Minister of Human Resources Development was unable to complete, for the moment, and which the Prime Minister wanted to keep under