

*The Address—Mr. Clark*

Prime Minister that if he truly wants to maintain and strengthen this federal and diverse nation, that attitude must change. The place for it to start to change will be in the policies of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, the policies of the Minister of Transport and the policies of other ministers who, too often, have shown an arrogant insensitivity to the concerns and requirements of that part of the country.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Clark:** Madam Speaker, Quebecers and Canadians have a right to demand proof that this government have in fact relinquished their former attitudes, that they renounced their commitment to the status quo and that they finally have understood the concept of renewed federalism. Quebecers and Canadians have a right to demand that the federal government's good intentions not be limited to the referendum period. They have a right to demand that after the referendum the Canadian government enter into a genuine dialogue with their provincial partners. In my view, all Canadians can still be convinced of this, including those who will be called upon to vote at the referendum if this government publicly recognize that Canada and Quebec are at a crossroads and that we now have an opportunity to renew our federation and put Canada on the road to the twenty-first century.

And Quebecers and Canadians can still be convinced if this government finally accept the legitimacy of regional drives, if they stop perceiving them as mere signs of regional isolationism.

Why should we fear the emergence of regional identities? Quite the opposite, we should be proud of these, because they reflect constructive forces on which to build tomorrow's Canada.

Madam Speaker, the time has come to stop treating the just demands of provinces as pure bickering. Moreover, this government must be aware that the process in which Canada must engage is much more than a war of words, placards and propaganda. The issue's dimensions are of a fundamental nature. The question is whether or not Canada is ready to proceed on the road to renewed federalism, whether Canada will show through concrete actions that it is proceeding in that direction, whether the federal government will treat provinces as equal partners.

The government I led understood that and that is why in the short time we were in power we established a system of good relations with the provinces, we solved certain controversial issues and particularly we set in motion the process for a renewed federation.

A task force was set up to prepare the federal government's plan for a renewed federation and its terms of reference were made public. Even if we no longer have the same means, the work undertaken last year by Senator Arthur Tremblay is still continuing and it is my firm determination as Leader of the

Progressive Conservative Party to submit to the people of Canada a comprehensive plan for a genuine renewal of the Canadian federation, because it is in renewed federalism that lies the key to our collective future, the key to the future of Canada as well as the future of Quebec. Indeed, it is because my party and I believe deeply in that that the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada joined the No forces to fight the proposed sovereignty-association being promoted by the Parti Québécois.

In the context of the referendum debate, our position has always been clear and unequivocal. We are for the renewal of the Canadian federation. But, Madam Speaker, the no of the Progressive Conservative Party has a real positive meaning—to say no is to say yes to the change we set in motion, yes to the renewal of the Canadian federation, yes to the future.

Madam Speaker, the Canada which Quebecers are being asked to reject by the proponents of sovereignty-association, that Canada no longer exists. There was a time when Quebecers were the only ones calling for a constitutional change. Today, the change is being called for by all provinces. There was a time when out of necessity only French-speaking members were bilingual. Today, that has changed radically. English-speaking members from all areas of this country, from Kingston, Stratford, Vancouver, Toronto, Woodstock, Oshawa and even Alberta, have chosen to learn French.

There was a time when it might have been a disadvantage to be French-speaking in the public service or in business. Today, that is not a disadvantage, it is an advantage, and that is another change in Canadian life.

Madam Speaker, every community changes, evolves, becomes surer of itself as it grows. Quebec has evolved dramatically since the quiet revolution. So has Canada. Quebecers have realized the many changes that have occurred in their province since 1960. The same thing happened in Ontario, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland. One must also keep in mind that in this vast country, with its oil, its natural resources, its cultural diversity and its open spaces, change has only begun and that change offers us all unique opportunities.

Of course, these opportunities exist throughout the country and they can be rejected through fear of the future. But what would have happened to Antonine Maillet if she had been afraid of the future and had refused to publish her works? She would certainly not have been awarded the Prix Goncourt. What would have happened to Paul Desmarais if he had refused to have confidence in the future? He would certainly not have transformed a small family business in Sudbury into a great financial empire in Montreal.

What would have happened to Gilles Villeneuve if he had not had confidence in his talent and had not agreed to compete? He would certainly not have become a champion racer. When you have confidence in your potential, why confine your future within overly narrow boundaries? When you are proud