

Newfoundland

that he is opposed to centralization and favours provincial autonomy. At the same time he reserves the right to maintain his centralizing attitude—which has characterized his whole political life—should he ever assume power and become leader of our government.

He submitted the following amendment to the house. I quote: "And whereas it is desirable that the government of Canada should consult with the governments of the several provinces in respect to the said matter; now therefore be it resolved that the government of Canada be required to consult at once the governments of the several provinces and that upon a satisfactory conclusion of such consultations 'a humble address be presented to His Majesty in the following words':"

"And upon a satisfactory conclusion of such consultations". Who will decide whether the consultations are satisfactory? No one. The resolution does not say.

He leaves himself a way out. He shows or rather tries to show the province of Quebec that he is against centralization and for autonomy, but if ever he should come to power, and be criticized for amending the constitution, he will simply reply: "I consulted the provinces and in my opinion these consultations came to a satisfactory conclusion".

Such will be the attitude of the leader of the opposition in the future.

Had he been sincere, had he intended to stand by what he said in his speeches, the amendment he submitted would have included the words: "with the consent of the provinces". That is entirely different from the expression "satisfactory conclusion of consultations".

Instead, he tried to raise an iron curtain between himself and his future political life. This is the attitude of a man lacking in sincerity because, from the political standpoint, this amendment, for sheer hypocrisy, tops any other ever introduced in the house. Nor can I accept the contention of all the speakers who interpreted "satisfactory conclusion" as meaning "consent" of the provinces. Such was the inference made this afternoon by the hon. member for Stanstead (Mr. Hackett). He tried to create . . .

(Text):

Mr. Hackett: Mr. Speaker, I rise to a question of privilege. The hon. gentleman has put into my mouth words I did not utter, and I ask him to withdraw them.

Some hon. Members: Go ahead.

(Translation):

Mr. LaCroix: Mr. Speaker, I feel that under the circumstances . . .

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Stanstead (Mr. Hackett) has just complained to the chair that the hon. member for Quebec-Montmorency (Mr. LaCroix) has uttered certain words—

Mr. LaCroix: What are the words which the hon. member does not like?

(Text):

Mr. Speaker: Would the hon. member kindly mention the words the hon. gentleman has used, and which the hon. member says he did not utter?

Mr. Hackett: The hon. gentleman has put into my mouth—

(Translation):

Mr. LaCroix: What expression of mine did the hon. member find offensive?

(Text):

Mr. Hackett: The hon. gentleman has said that I used the word "consent" in referring to the provinces.

Mr. Brunelle: Not that you used it.

(Translation):

Mr. LaCroix: Would the hon. member have any objection to speaking in French? I do not understand what he says.

(Text):

Mr. Hackett: I am not going to be questioned.

(Translation):

Mr. LaCroix: May I, in turn, direct a question to the hon. member? Since he represents a Quebec French-Canadian constituency—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. LaCroix: Since he represents a Quebec French-Canadian constituency, could he repeat in French what he has just said in English?

(Text):

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would suggest to the hon. member for Stanstead (Mr. Hackett) that if he did not use the word "consent", he might mention the word he did use so that the hon. member will understand what word he should use.

Mr. Hackett: I have merely stated, Mr. Speaker, that I did not use that word with reference to the provinces. I thought the hon. gentleman would be glad to know that so that he would not be proceeding on a basis