

The other one, the seventh category of rights that we want to enshrine in our constitution is very important, and would ensure the right to education in the language of the minority. Mr. Speaker, I participated in the campaign with my colleagues and some members on the other side of this House, were saying to the people in the last referendum in Quebec: If you vote no to sovereignty-association, we are going to renew federalism and particularly we guarantee that we shall do our utmost to protect minorities outside Quebec. I am one of those who, in Quebec, criticized Mr. Lévesque and his supporters for choosing a selfish option, an option which completely ignored one million Francophones outside Quebec and the kinds of territorial withdrawal he proposed and still supports, even if his project is delayed for four or five years for electoral purposes, seemed unfair to me and I found really inhuman to abandon and ignore, when you are the premier of a province, almost one million French-speaking Canadians who deserve more from a government that pretends to protect the French language in the province of Quebec.

Yet, today, in this constitutional process, Mr. Speaker, we are protecting Francophone minorities outside Quebec as we are also protecting Anglophone minorities in Quebec for educational purposes. Canadian citizens will be entitled to send their children to the school of their choice everywhere in Canada and this is essential. And the basic purpose of section 23 of our project which is before the House is strictly to protect minorities who already have Canadian citizenship. This is essential.

Mr. Speaker, when we summarize what I just mentioned in the second stage of our process, that is to say the inclusion of a charter of rights while patriating our constitution, we realize that those seven categories of rights are essentially basic rights, and freedoms. Of course, the titles of the document say so, but it is important to repeat it because it has not been mentioned very often in this debate. We hear more about procedural matters. We hear more about referendum, committee, delay in committee, respect or non-respect for Parliament, legal action, but the ordinary citizen deserves and has a right to know that our proposal involves directly his freedom, his dignity and his basic rights.

And that is why I did go to the trouble and took the time to insist on them, to detail them and to extract them from the proposed resolution we are discussing here today. The third essential element in our constitutional procedure is the insertion of a section to entrench the equalization principle, and God knows that as a member I am supporting the fight against regional disparities. I come myself from a region which had a low rate of economic growth before the creation of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion, and I am proud to say that since 1969, about 4,000 new jobs have been created in my region alone, in my federal constituency of Drummond, thanks to the application of a principle in which this government deeply believes and wants to enshrine in the Canadian Consti-

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tion, the principle of the fight against regional disparities and the principle of equal opportunities for all, across Canada.

In my constituency, and I know from experience, for 10 years the Canadian government, in applying this principle, has been involved in 140 projects, has made it possible to create almost 4,000 jobs, has given grants for \$25 million and has consolidated thousands of jobs, and that is less than what has been done in many other regions in Canada where the Department of Regional Economic Expansion also worked and participated in different projects. In an area where 45 per cent of the industrial work force used to depend on the textile industry, I can say today that through the application of this principle we have succeeded in varying our industry so that the textile workers who have very important jobs and deserve the protection we are giving them through our excellent policies, now represent no more than 8 per cent of the work force in the Drummond constituency, because thousands of other jobs have been created and all kinds of businesses have appeared.

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It is precisely this kind of principle which will enable those regions with a low economic growth rate, those which are less advantaged than others in Canada, to develop; it is precisely this kind of principle that we want to see enshrined in the constitution, Mr. Speaker. This is the very essence of Canada, the equitable distribution of wealth in this country, and this is the third stage of our constitutional proposal. But who and in the name of what principle would oppose the entrenchment of fundamental rights and freedoms but also the principle of the fight against regional disparities and for equal opportunities for all in Canada? This is what we are doing, Mr. Speaker, and this is what the people must know.

The fourth stage, the fourth step of our undertaking in this matter is to find a mechanism which will enable us in future to avoid the kind of meetings which require unanimity to bring about some change, I mean the amending formula. We must find a mechanism, a process, a way so that we may in future, whenever a large majority of partners, of provinces and the Canadian government deem it reasonable, amend the constitution without going to London, because by that time it will have been patriated, our constitution will be back here, but it will not require unanimity, which, as I said earlier, ends up in a dead end in most cases, as the experience of the past 53 years has shown.

What we have in the way of a mechanism in that proposal is quite simple. For a maximum of two years, we have the unanimity rule. We say: Agreed, let us not go too far, let us force nothing upon the provinces during a two-year period. Once we have our own constitution in Canada, there will be no change without the unanimous consent of the provinces and the federal government. This is what is said in our proposal. But in two years time, however, we will negotiate. There is even a section in the proposal, Mr. Speaker, under which we