

*Supply*

have a role to play but every member must have the real opportunity to participate in defining the future of our country.

Second, the process must include others with a stake in the outcome such as aboriginal nations, the north, official language minorities, multicultural communities, business, trade unions. Because building a constitution is not the private domain of governments or first ministers.

The Constitution is a constitution for whatever party happens to be in power: New Democratic, Liberal or Conservative. It is a constitution for all of the people, therefore, all of the people have to be a part of forming that constitution. There are many interests at stake. All of them are important and all of them represent that diversity of our country which we want to see enshrined in our constitution.

The third principle is that the process must be genuinely balanced, without the perception of dominance or manipulation by any one group, or by any one participant. It is not enough, simply, to have others attend meetings or to be involved to create the perception of legitimacy. There must be a real and legitimate role for all of those who have a stake.

The fourth principle is that we must draw upon the views of ordinary people and of expert opinion. We must take seriously the various commissions that are under way in the provinces and in the Yukon territory. The Spicer Commission, which is going to report, must function as a legitimate vehicle for Canadians and its recommendations, having heard tens of thousands of Canadians, must be taken seriously by this government.

[*Translation*]

Fifth, there must be a precise timetable and a commitment from the start of all participants to make a decision on the a final package of proposed amendments.

The sixth principle calls for the process to be open and have no hidden agenda. We cannot have an honest-looking process going on in one room while the real changes are negotiated in another room, behind closed doors.

Finally, the desire to remain within a renewed Canadian federation must be the only precondition to the discussion process. We must embark on this process with an open mind, ready to listen, and with the courage to act.

[*English*]

There are many mechanisms by which we can proceed with constitutional change that will meet these basic criteria. Some, such as a constituent assembly which I proposed some eight months ago in this House and which, I might add, the Prime Minister agreed to look at very seriously. It has been discussed in this House and has been used with some success in other parts of the world. We can learn from others. We are not the first country that has had to grapple with the issues that we in Canada are grappling with today. There are other models that can be adopted to meet the needs of Canada and reflect the reality of our nation.

We can be developing a new model that will be a model for the world. Constitutional conventions, constituent assembly, constitutional conferences are examples of a process which seek to bring in not only elected politicians but also those others who have a stake in the future of our country. Regardless of what process we choose, it must be a process that involves all Canadians.

I call on this House today to pass this motion and to adopt these seven criteria for an open and honest process. I call upon all members to make it clear that, at this time, we are not prepared to leave the fate of this country and its Constitution in the hands of just a few people.

Canada's future security, the cultural well-being of our communities and the inheritance we leave for the future of our children depends on the outcome of this process. We must clearly define together our vision of where we want the country to go. To do that, we need a process based on the principles we are suggesting today.

• (1210)

We have deliberately said in our motion that this is not a non-confidence motion in the government, but rather it is an attempt to bring together the parties of this House to accept some common principles on the process.