

deliver something much different, a kind of Dow Jones corporation federalism.

A few weeks ago in Toronto the Prime Minister said that the new Constitution must be built on the same principles that brought us deregulation, privatization, the Canada—U.S. trade deal and the GST.

I want to say to the Prime Minister that he could not be more wrong.

• (1200)

I want to say to the Prime Minister that unless he abandons his vision of a corporate Canada and a corporate federalism, he is doomed to fail because it is a vision Canadians do not share and will not accept. If he is not willing to listen to Canadians on this critical issue, then he must step aside and let Canadians articulate their vision of the country through a general election.

Mr. Speaker, it is the responsibility of every member of this Chamber to do what we can to restore the trust of Canadians. We in the New Democratic Party take that responsibility very seriously and that is why we have introduced this motion today.

The Canadian people are not asking their elected representatives for anything to which they do not have a right. They are asking us to be open, to be honest and to be consistent.

The Prime Minister has said that the government has learned from the Meech Lake process. He has set up a number of public committees and working groups to listen to Canadians and to openly discuss the options available. Yet, while the Spicer Commission is in the headlines and the Commons and Senate committee meet publicly to look at the amending formula, there are clearly a whole series of initiatives under way that are not in the public eye and that are being done behind closed doors.

We have, for example, Mr. Speaker, a group of deputy ministers. I asked the Acting Prime Minister yesterday, and he refused to even table the terms of reference for those deputy ministers. Surely the public has a right to know. Surely the public has a right to know what report they put forward. And I say again, that the Prime Minister should table that report in this House of Commons so that all Canadians can know what kind of thinking has gone into the government's position.

Supply

At the same time, we have a finance minister who announces he is beginning to negotiate new fiscal arrangements that determine such programs as medicare and other social programs. He is going to negotiate equalization and that, in fact, could result in a kind of decentralization of programs or different kinds of arrangements among the provinces and territories in Canada in a kind of back door constitution making. Well, that is not good enough. We do not want a back door constitution making. We do not want a closed door constitution making. We want an open door process where all Canadians can see the positions of all political parties and of all of the key players in these discussions.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the Prime Minister today that coming up with a way of muzzling critics in order to make the people of Canada feel good and a new way of doing the preliminary work for another last minute marathon will not be enough. It will not work and I can tell the Prime Minister that this caucus will not take part in that process.

I also hope that the Liberal Party will join us to pass this motion and support the amendments we proposed as well as our suggestions regarding the wider scope to be given to the proceedings of the Committee on the constitutional amendment formula.

[*English*]

I said in my opening comments that this motion comes before the House at a very critical time, and the Speaker reminded us of that earlier this morning. It comes at a time when as members of Parliament we have the opportunity to ensure that this round of constitutional discussions is an open round and a round for all Canadians.

We have to learn from the past, and I think we have learned from the Meech Lake process about what it takes to include and involve as many people that can and want to be involved in that process, and not to exclude any one group. The process we are suggesting must be open and conciliatory and, in my view, must meet the seven specific criteria that we have set out in this motion.

I will briefly reiterate those, Mr. Speaker. The first principle of the process should be that all sides of Parliament and all legislatures must be represented, not just one party or one part of the parliamentary process and not just government. Parliament and legislatures