

The Constitution

publicists or other people propose to change things in this area. Can they not realize that they are systematically opposing those mentalities or those ways of changing things, for example the entrenchment of language rights, which are things that many Canadians want? When we speak of entrenching in a constitution language rights or educational rights, there are things that some people of different backgrounds like to see in their legal documents, in their constitutional documents. People may hold different opinions about the means of doing this, but at some time these questions will have to be reconciled. And I hope that the Progressive Conservative Party will go before the joint committee to make positive proposals to improve the resolution, if they really want to improve it. But, Mr. Speaker, the country must move on these questions. In the resolution or in the constitutional proposal, for Acadians there are clearly things missing.

I said earlier that as far as the procedures and some of the things that are being proposed are concerned, if I were doing it, I would perhaps do it differently. But in a debate like this, Mr. Speaker, we must reconcile our ideas. We are sometimes going to have to find precisely what is the common ground on which we can move. Moreover, I would like to see many other things in this resolution. For example, it does not contain the institutionalization of bilingualism in New Brunswick. Why? It is because the federal government, contrary to what the members of the opposition say, has not wished to hamper the rights of the provinces.

We have said that this would be kept to a strict minimum for educational rights. Is there a member in the House who can honestly say that it is possible to respond to the aspirations of Francophones in this country without at least entrenching in the constitution their right to an education in their language? What can we say of those fine people who throughout the debate on Bill 101, asked the federal government to intercede in the Supreme Court of Canada? I myself heard the Leader of the opposition stand up in the House and ask the government to oppose Bill 101 before the Supreme Court of Canada. In this draft resolution we are doing something which runs directly counter to the spirit of Bill 101, precisely to give the Anglophone minority of Quebec and the Francophone minorities in the other provinces the right to an education in their language.

● (2020)

[*English*]

Mr. Blenkarn: I wonder if the hon. member would permit a question? It involves a matter which is material to what he is saying.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Will the hon. member accept a question?

Mr. Breau: I will, at the end of my speech, Mr. Speaker.

[*Translation*]

So this resolution contains the minimum. As an Acadian, I would prefer to see the institutionalization of bilingualism in the provincial services of my province. The Premier of New Brunswick has repeated on several occasions that he would be willing to do this. I therefore wonder why, then, he does not convene the legislative assembly of New Brunswick and pass a resolution in accordance with which he could ask the federal Parliament to include the entrenchment of provincial language rights in this resolution, to ensure more or less what is contained in the present section 133 which is going to apply to Quebec and Manitoba? It could apply to New Brunswick. I would, therefore, like the Premier of New Brunswick to convene the legislative assembly and pass a resolution. I am convinced that the debate would not be very long, because he says his party would agree. The Liberal party would certainly agree in New Brunswick, and it would then be possible to incorporate the entrenchment of language rights for New Brunswick in this resolution, which would include, moreover, educational rights, and this is important for us as an insurance policy. This would not give us anything new right away, because educational rights have been obtained politically. There are still things to do. Clearly, there are some Anglophone cities in New Brunswick which have a large Francophone minority and which still do not offer an education in French. But if the Premier of New Brunswick wanted to, it would be possible to pass a resolution in the legislative assembly which would institutionalize services in French and in English in New Brunswick and to incorporate that in this resolution.

I will end on this note, Mr. Speaker. The reason why this is not done is precisely to avoid doing what the Progressive Conservatives accuse us of. In this resolution, the strict minimum for hampering provincial rights deals with educational rights. So, Mr. Speaker, I hope that in the hours that follow—

[*English*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe (Mr. Beatty).

Mr. Blenkarn: Mr. Speaker, I have a question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Mississauga South (Mr. Blenkarn) wishes to ask a question. I wish to point out that the time allotted to the hon. member for Gloucester (Mr. Breau) has expired, and the hon. member for Mississauga South can only ask a question with the unanimous consent of the House. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Blenkarn: Mr. Speaker, I believe there was unanimous consent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair heard some noes. The hon. member for Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe.