

The Constitution

pate in the task of building our country. Finally, we are correcting an injustice that has gone on far too long. It would be unforgivable if we were to allow this situation to persist.

Among the rights we seek to enshrine in the Constitution are the rights of all Canadians to share in the boundless wealth and opportunity we have in Canada. For many years Ontario shared without complaint its tax dollars to aid in the development of other parts of Canada. Now, as the situation shifts, other areas of the country are able to share the responsibility of delivering the promise of Canada to all Canadians. A child from a less advantaged part of Canada must never lose out on that promise because he or she chooses to remain close to family roots. It is essential that the quality of government services be equal and that job opportunities exist everywhere in Canada, regardless of where a Canadian chooses to live.

Equalization is a principle that is vital to the continued survival of Canada as a nation together. Though regions formerly in need of assistance have found sources of wealth, opportunities will never be completely equal in Canada. But across this vast land, the quality of life may be more important than resources lying underground or in the offshore, more satisfying than life in the industrial cities of central Canada. If we can preserve the beauty that is tradition, if we can save the heritage of families and communities remaining together at home, then equalization will be seen, not just as an economic leveller, but as a builder.

Just as important as equalization is the right of Canadian residents to seek employment and residence anywhere in Canada. Mobility rights are an important guarantee of that opportunity. For many years Ontario's strong industrial base provided Canadians and people from all over the world with the opportunity to pursue a rewarding livelihood. Ontario's cities, towns and countryside are enriched by the contribution of peoples from around the world and across Canada who choose to make Ontario home. Once again, the shift in economic opportunity makes it essential that Canada is home to all Canadians.

The western provinces now welcome our sons and daughters to share in the boom that this region is experiencing. For its part, Atlantic Canada stands on the threshold of untold wealth, due in large part to the action of this government to assert Canadian sovereignty over the 200-mile limit.

Mobility, like free speech, is a fundamental right. Anything which would hamper this right flies in the face of the ideals which are Canada. Enshrining this right in the Constitution of Canada tells Canadians that all of Canada is theirs. The mere accident of birth in one area or another has never prevented an individual from sharing in the boundless promise that is Canada. It must never do so, for without the right of mobility for all of its citizens, Canada is a pointless, balkanized collection of communities out of touch with itself.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to give my support to the principle of enshrining minority language education rights for our two official languages, where numbers warrant.

If a constitution is to reflect the make-up of a country, it must have an amending formula which provides for orderly and fair amendment. For that reason, I favour the position advocated by the government. The Victoria formula, as amended, gives all regions, and indeed all provinces, a large measure of protection which will ensure that their interests are not tampered with by a small majority in the country. By requiring the approval of the two most populous provinces, the support of two provinces in western Canada representing 50 per cent of the population in that region, and by needing the endorsement of two provinces in the Atlantic region, amendments under the Victoria formula will represent a consensus from all regions of the country. Of course, the provinces and the federal government have the two years following patriation in which to arrive at a formula by unanimous consent. While this has not been successful in the past, one would hope that the urgency to achieve greater consensus on an amending formula will spur the first ministers to closer agreement.

I spoke earlier of the nightmare that Canadians would face with the Vancouver formula. This formula is really a cop-out, requiring no commitment by the provinces to respect rights in a uniform and consistent pattern across Canada. If we are to remain as one country, we must assert once and for all that Canadian citizenship is one citizenship for all Canadians.

One of the people who came to my office in the past few months represented a group who wanted to ensure that this was not the end of the line for constitutional change. I made the commitment then, and I do so now: there is much, much more to be discussed at the first ministers' conferences which will be constitutionally required under this resolution. Family law, questions relating to interprovincial and international trade, reform of the Senate, Supreme Court and regional representation on federal government bodies, and the divisions of power, are but a few matters for discussion.

But, Mr. Speaker, all of this means nothing if the people of Canada do not have fundamental rights embedded in their Constitution. We must stop comparing the rights and dignity of individual Canadians to regional representation on the CRTC, important though it may be. Let us stop the horse trading, bartering equality of men and women for a reformed Senate. Let us not wait until the question of offshore jurisdiction is settled before telling the aged and the disabled that, finally, they are part of the process of building Canada's future.

In this Parliament we are answering the most important question facing Canada since 1867. What comes first, the rights of the people or the rights of governments? Let us answer, loud and clear, "the people come first!" Now is the time to break the deadlock.

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to speak on this very important resolution and on the amendment which was brought forward by my colleague, the hon. member for Provencher (Mr. Epp).

First, I want to commend our leader in the Constitution committee, the hon. member for Provencher, as well as the