

Constitution Amendment, 1987

10. Section 44 of the said Act is repealed and the following substituted therefor:

"44. Subject to section 41, Parliament may exclusively make laws amending the Constitution of Canada in relation to the executive government of Canada or the Senate and House of Commons."

11. Subsection 46(1) of the said Act is repealed and the following substituted therefor:

"46. (1) The procedures for amendment under sections 38, 41 and 43 may be initiated either by the Senate or the House of Commons or by the legislative assembly of a province."

12. Subsection 47(1) of the said Act is repealed and the following substituted therefor:

"47. (1) An amendment to the Constitution of Canada made by proclamation under section 38, 41 or 43 may be made without a resolution of the Senate authorizing the issue of the proclamation if, within one hundred and eighty days after the adoption by the House of Commons of a resolution authorizing its issue, the Senate has not adopted such a resolution and if, at any time after the expiration of that period, the House of Commons again adopts the resolution."

13. Part VI of the said Act is repealed and the following substituted therefor:

"PART VI

CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCES

50. (1) A constitutional conference composed of the Prime Minister of Canada and the first ministers of the provinces shall be convened by the Prime Minister of Canada at least once each year, commencing in 1988.

(2) The conferences convened under subsection (1) shall have included on their agenda the following matters:

(a) Senate reform, including the role and functions of the Senate, its powers, the method of selecting Senators and representation in the Senate;

(b) roles and responsibilities in relation to fisheries; and

(c) such other matters as are agreed upon."

14. Subsection 52(2) of the said Act is amended by striking out the word "and" at the end of paragraph (b) thereof, by adding the word "and" at the end of paragraph (c) thereof and by adding thereto the following paragraph:

"(d) any other amendment to the Constitution of Canada."

15. Section 61 of the said Act is repealed and the following substituted therefor:

"61. A reference to the *Constitution Act 1982*, or a reference to the *Constitution Acts 1867 to 1982*, shall be deemed to include a reference to any amendments thereto."

General

16. Nothing in section 2 of the *Constitution Act, 1867* affects section 25 or 27 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* or class 24 of section 91 of the *Constitution Act, 1867*.

CITATION

17. This amendment may be cited as the *Constitution Amendment, 1987*.

And the amendments of Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra) (p. 9585) and Mr. Broadbent (p. 9586).

Mr. Speaker: I understand we were on questions and comments on the speech of the Hon. Member for Kenora—Rainy River (Mr. Parry). Are there any questions or comments?

Mr. Harris: Mr. Speaker, at the close of debate before Question Period the Hon. Member for Kenora—Rainy River (Mr. Parry) was elucidating for the House some of the weaknesses of the arguments which have been presented against the adoption of the Meech Lake Accord, other than those contained in the amendment proposed by the New Democratic Party. I was quite interested in his comments. I wonder if he could expound a little further on them as I would be very interested in hearing further comment on that.

Mr. Parry: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Hon. Member for St. John's East (Mr. Harris) for his question. I was indeed expanding on what I saw as the weaknesses of the

arguments which have been presented against the Meech Lake Accord.

I believe that immigrants such as myself and the Hon. Member for Davenport (Mr. Caccia) do not require the inclusion of a distinct society clause such as is envisaged to address the needs of the Province of Quebec. I also believe that the prime identifier in constitutional terms for the aboriginal people is the existence of treaties and the existence of a process to resolve areas which are not yet under treaty such that the constitutional entrenchment is secondary to the existence of the treaties.

● (1220)

There is, after all, also the experience of the unfortunately unsuccessful discussions toward self-government. They were, however, constitutionally entrenched discussions, and similarly with multiculturalism. For those of us who come from other cultures, other than the mainstream ones, whether we were born in Canada or outside Canada, this is a daily affirmation. After all, we have not undergone the internal divisions, the rifts and the travails, that rent the Province of Quebec over this very question of membership within the Canadian Confederation.

[Translation]

So, Mr. Speaker, the words "distinct society" will be entrenched in the present Constitution to allay the deep and legitimate fears of Quebecers regarding their status in North America. On the North American continent inhabited by 250 million mostly English-speaking people, Quebecers have always been afraid, with reason, of being isolated or assimilated by the English world. While the English fact inside Quebec can be manipulated from outside the province in order to downgrade the French fact that is alive within the Province of Quebec and which we should all recognize in this debate, I stand in solidarity with Quebecers who need to have these words, "distinct society", included in the Constitution.

[English]

Other arguments have been equally weak. The Hon. Member for St. Henri—Westmount (Mr. Johnston) talked of the dream of a bilingual Canada. That dream has never been there. It is the dream of the availability of services in both languages across the country that has existed. Consequently, the destruction of that straw man was of course easy.

The perspective of my hon. colleague from Cochrane—Superior frankly seemed to eliminate any acknowledgment that he was a representative of a region of Canada as well as, of course, a Canadian and a federalist. It seemed to ignore the diversity of our own roots that are spread right across the country and indeed from outside the country but which lead to the diversity and differences that exist within Canada today and which we must not only recognize but indeed celebrate.

The bard of Scotland, Robert Burns, said: "Oh wad some power the giftie gie us, To see oursels as others see us!" Let us believe that many who oppose this Accord will be seen by