

Native, English, French and other communities in Canada—have an adequate representation, and it is certainly not by applying the two amendments moved by the Reform Party that we will achieve this result.

So, it is important to reject these two amendments in order to ensure that the federal distribution map, if it needs to be used again in the future—I personally hope that we will never need it again—because, if there is a conclusion that we come to beyond the issue of the distribution map, it is the fact that double representation, with federal and provincial members of Parliament, is confusing to people. They do not know who is responsible for what any more. It would be very important to change this situation.

If I were a federalist, I would say: “Let us clarify in the Constitution the roles of everyone so that we do not trip over the same responsibilities”. But as a sovereignist, and because of my own experience over the past 30 years, I believe that the solution is obviously for Quebec to achieve sovereignty.

• (1635)

But, in order to respect Quebecers’ right to representation, and also because we were elected not only to promote the cause of sovereignty, but to defend Quebec’s interests, I think it is important that we pass legislation that will allow for the best possible representation of all voters in Canada—in my particular case, those of Quebec—and therefore I hope that these amendments will be rejected so that we can ensure proper representation for all the people who deserve it, for all citizens of Quebec and Canada.

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. members: Question.

The Deputy Speaker: The question is on Motion No. 1. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Deputy Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Deputy Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Deputy Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

Government Orders

The Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 76.1(8), the recorded division on the motion stands deferred. The recorded division will also apply to Motions Nos. 2, 3, 5 and 7.

It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the question to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment is as follows: the hon. member for Delta—Fisheries.

[Translation]

The House will now proceed to consideration of Motion No. 4, which will be debated and voted on separately.

Mr. François Langlois (Bellechasse, BQ) moved:

Motion No. 4

That Bill C-69, in Clause 16, be amended by replacing lines 41 to 44, page 8, with the following:

“Constitution Act, 1867 and, notwithstanding the foregoing, when by application of this subsection the number of members to be assigned to the Province of Quebec is less than 25 per cent of the total number of members in the House of Commons, the Chief Electoral Officer shall assign at least 25 per cent of the total number of members to the Province of Quebec.

(2.1) The Chief Electoral Officer shall cause a notice to be published in the Canada Gazette forthwith setting out the results thereof.”

He said: Mr. Speaker, we are finally at the heart of the debate. We are nearing the point where we will know whether or not this House recognizes Quebec a right we have always considered normal, as one of the two founding peoples, the right to be represented according to our historical participation in Canadian institutions. Aside from what my friend, the hon. member for Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, was saying awhile ago—since we hope that this bill on electoral boundaries will not apply to Quebec—we must continue to live with the institutions where we have been called to serve and work, in the hope of improving them until such time when Quebec democratically chooses to separate.

The Constitution Act of 1791, the first providing for elected representation, gave Quebec a large majority of seats. It means that in 1791, francophones controlled the legislative assembly. The Union Act of 1840 reduced Quebecers’ share to half the seats in the House of the Province of Canada although, at the time, their numbers were far greater than those of the English speaking population.

• (1640)

On the eve of the union of 1867, there were, right here in Ottawa, in the Parliament of the Province of Canada, 65 members from Quebec and 65 members from Upper Canada. We had half the seats. What happened since then? From 65 out of 130, or 50 per cent, as we were on June 30, 1867, we went the very next