

The Constitution

Mr. Chrétien: —that we needed to protect in the constitution the rights of Canadians to mobility, non-discrimination and other basic rights, and we will do it now.

An hon. Member: Who is we?

Mr. Chrétien: The Canadian Parliament. That is the promise we have made, Mr. Speaker, and that is the promise we will keep. After 53 years, we will settle the problem once and for all.

[*English*]

Mr. Clark: That was a disgrace to Parliament, to Quebec and to Canada.

Mr. Rossi: You are a disgrace.

Mr. Malone: You don't know your country. You do not know anything.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Rossi: Go Back to the farm where you belong.

Mr. Malone: Shut up. You don't know anything.

Mr. Rossi: Go back to the farm.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. The hon. member for Provencher (Mr. Epp).

Hon. Jake Epp (Provencher): Mr. Speaker, in speaking in support of the resolution before us, and after the speech of the Minister of Justice (Mr. Chrétien), I would like to get back to the realities. I think at times the minister went well beyond the scope of reality and was also caught up by his own rhetoric and histrionics.

An hon. Member: A fanatic, a Hitler.

Mr. Epp: I think it is important that we take a look at the elements of the resolution as well as what has brought this Parliament and Canadians to this position.

I want to spend just a little time on the speech of the Minister of Justice. The minister put into question whether there was agreement between the premiers on the Vancouver consensus. He knows very well, as he co-chaired a committee, that a consensus developed during the summer on the Vancouver consensus. Neither the minister nor the Leader of the NDP (Mr. Broadbent) has attacked the Vancouver consensus *per se*. What they have really said is that there are flaws in that consensus or formula. I think the minister wants to be fair and objective about this, so if he takes a look at his package and his proposed resolution, he should agree that the same criticism can be made.

There are members of the minister's own caucus who object seriously to clause 41. There are members of the New Democratic Party who object to clause 41. There are premiers who object to clause 41, but we have not even mentioned, to this point, the abhorrence of clause 42. If the minister is a fair-minded person, surely he does not want to say today in this

House that his formula suddenly has more support or more strength because one government supports it, his, and that is the only government which supports it in that sense because the premier of Ontario, for instance, as recently as the Tuesday on which the premiers met in Toronto, said that while Ontario had traditionally supported either the Victoria or Victoria-modified, he could now see the validity of the Vancouver consensus. Why? It is very simple.

It is because he has realized, as a person who is looking at the country and the need to make it work, that he was seeing that the Vancouver consensus fundamentally retained the principle that the provinces are equal entities and that we do not have class A provinces, class B provinces and class C provinces. My hon. colleague, the hon. member for Malpeque (Mr. Gass), asked where Prince Edward Island is in our formula. Is Prince Edward Island written off? Does Prince Edward Island not exist? Does the minister not care?

The minister says today that we should not accept the formula the premiers agreed to. He is saying that his is better. Why? His actually eliminates Canadians totally. That is what the minister is saying to us.

I know the Minister of Justice quite well. He said that he has faith in the Canadian people. So do I. If that is the case, no matter what the minister's objections have been throughout the summer of negotiations—or today for that matter—why does he object to the people of Canada, through their elected representatives here in Parliament and their premiers who are elected in their respective provinces, making all future amendments to the constitution? Why does the minister insist it be done in Britain rather than in Canada? Why does the minister have more faith in Westminster than he has in this House, the legislatures and the premiers? That is the question he must answer, because under the government's package there is no question that the British parliament is being asked to amend the constitution under an amending formula to which all or no other amendments can ever be brought to bear again. The government wants to bootleg through Britain an amendment in a formula which will never be used again or cannot be used by anyone else. That is what the government is asking Canadians and this Parliament to do.

The Minister of Justice also says he is interested in fair play. So am I, and I sincerely believe that he is that kind of person, but if that is the case, if we look at language rights in the package he has introduced, the proposed resolution, what he is doing for all time is making immigrants who move to the province of Quebec second-class citizens in terms of education and minority language rights. What they are doing is entrenching sections of Bill 101. He said today on the floor of the House that he is in favour of fair play. That is exactly what they are doing in that package. He mentioned, for example, that the War Measures Act cannot be used again under the bill of rights which is included in the proposed resolution. What about the emergency power? Can they not invoke the emergency powers and then come in with the War Measures Act?