

The Constitution

as recently illustrated in Iran where the people lost faith in the existing constitution and there was revolution.

However, with unanimity on patriation of our constitution and with consensus on the amending formula, I would like to deal briefly with why I cannot support the Victoria amending formula as proposed. That is because it enshrines in stone, from now until doomsday, that two provinces, the province of Ontario and the province of Quebec, will forever have a veto. Whether or not they end up with only 10 per cent of the population in the country 150 years from now, they still will have a veto. I submit that is not fair and is not looking into the future. I do not think any particular province or region should have a veto on constitutional change.

With the unanimity on patriation and the consensus evolving around the Vancouver formula, any person with any leadership qualities should now be able to fashion an agreement on patriation and an amending formula, and bring the British North America Act back to Canada. Once it is in Canada we can then institute any other changes by means of our amending formula. Unless a leader is being unreasonable or is holding out for some special amending formula, or for some personal ideology that he wants to have incorporated into the package to be passed in Westminster, there is no doubt in my mind that an agreement for patriation and an amending formula could be fashioned—possibly within 48 hours.

● (1410)

That is not the case, however, and the reason is that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the government insist on the Victoria formula and insist on adding a great deal more to the resolution that will go to Westminster than just patriation and the amending formula.

I feel that we should be moving ahead on this in the sense that if the governing party in the House of Commons were willing to give a little and not insist that its penmanship is better than that of others, and if it really wanted to bring the country together, it could do so.

How did the parties arrive at the positions they have taken in this House? It strikes me that the government position was stated as more or less a *fait accompli* in the resolution distributed after the first speaker began his remarks two weeks ago. It was dictated by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Chrétien), the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) and the Prime Minister, and they will not vary from what they have dictated.

How has the Progressive Conservative Party arrived at the position it has taken? Frankly, I think it has arrived at it in a negative fashion. I think it has looked at the resolution and said there are too many wrongs in it and that therefore the resolution is defective and a new resolution which is not so defective should be substituted. I say that is a negative way of arriving at a position. Certainly after the press heard the former prime minister, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) speak, they said he was against patriation and against an amending formula. That is not true but that is how they have perceived him and painted him—in a negative manner.

The New Democratic Party has arrived at its position by a more positive route, but with reservations. That party has said it supports patriation and an amending formula, but has certain reservations and will only agree with the government if it includes resource ownership in provincial hands. The hon. member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent) then added that he would have to meet with his caucus the next Monday and if they had some other things he would reserve the right to bring those up. That has not been reported but that party reserved its support on resources and whatever other ideas the caucus offered.

When the second speaker for the New Democratic Party spoke on October 7, we found out that the party was not just making a reservation on resource ownership. The hon. member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) expanded the New Democratic Party's reservations to include section 42, the referendum amending formula; equalization; minority language education, offshore resources and native peoples. That makes six matters on which the party now has reservations.

When the hon. member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie) spoke yesterday, he agreed with those six reservations. I could not help but notice also that the hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Hovdebo) issued a press statement last weekend in which he stated his position as being closer to that of the Leader of the Opposition than to that of the leader of his own party.

It seems to me that having arrived at its position from a more positive initial response, the NDP is now four-square with the position of the Conservative party. Their reservations are abundant and many. They are not just agreeing on patriation, and on amending formula, if the Victoria formula were to be accepted, but they have many reservations in other areas.

Where do I stand myself, Mr. Speaker? As I indicated last night, I am in favour of Canadianization of the constitution. Quite frankly, I am also in favour of Canadianization of and Canadian control over our economy. I wish we were not subject to the whim and will of so many foreign powers. I am in favour of patriation and I also want an amending formula. Personally, I have no objection to the charter of rights and freedoms. I have some small quarrels or reservations with it, but in principle I have no objections to it—except that it is dividing the country unnecessarily.

Besides patriation and the amending formula, the government also wants the United Kingdom to add a lot of other amendments—to the British North America Act before it comes back to Canada. Those would be enshrined—and then a new amending formula would be imposed. It would be much more difficult to amend after that, than for the Prime Minister to get his own prerogatives entrenched while the constitution is still in the United Kingdom.

I have no disagreement with the \$6 million advertising program—with the Canada geese saying, "Let's fly our constitution back to Canada", or that they want to have an amending formula. I do not complain of that; in fact I agree with it. But the ads do not say what else is in the resolution—the whole realm of other things involved.