

Canada? Why is there that kind of opposition? There should not be. What we need, instead, is a determination to move forward now, immediately, to bring our constitution to Canada in a way that we can work with it in Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: The government can introduce closure if they will. They intend to do that with the respect for Parliament that was shown by the late C. D. Howe. That is their intention.

An hon. Member: What respect do you have when you filibuster?

Mr. Clark: They talk about a filibuster. This must be the first time in the history of Canada or in the history of the British parliamentary system that anyone has talked about filibuster when the government has spoken more than the official opposition.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Collenette: Not true.

Mr. Clark: I will admit that the speakers of the official opposition have made more sense than the speakers of the government party. There have been 19 Liberal spokesmen and only 18 Progressive Conservative spokesmen, and they call it a filibuster.

Mr. Collenette: What about the NDP? They are part of the opposition.

Mr. Clark: The Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Collenette) suggests that the NDP should be considered part of my party. I am not exchanging letters with the hon. Leader of the NDP (Mr. Broadbent).

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: But I say to members like the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom), the hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Hovdebo), members who, I know, are concerned about the substance of the resolution brought forward by the government, and to members such as the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) who, I believe, would be opposed to closure on a constitutional question, that I hope when the time comes for them to cast their votes at a quarter to six this afternoon they will consider whether they want to invite deep rancour and deep division in this country by proceeding both with closure and with a constitutional package they know is divisive, or whether they would prefer to adopt the motion before the House now which would let the Parliament of Canada act today to bring the constitution home immediately in the way that Canadians want.

There are a number of merits to the constitutional amending formula which has been agreed to by the premiers. Of course one merit is the single fact that it has been agreed to. When all of the conditions that were uttered at the first ministers' conference are set aside, when all connections to any packages

are put aside, the House must ask the question: why was that formula given virtually unanimous approval in September? Why did it emerge as the only focus of ministerial consideration this summer? Why was the Victoria formula of 1971 not that focus? Why did Premier Davis just the other day acknowledge that he understood the Victoria formula was no longer acceptable? What other generally agreed on formula has ever emerged over all the last several years of debate? The Vancouver consensus is the inescapable amending formula in 1980 for this country. It is the only formula that seeks harmony in the federalism of Canada and allows unity in the national life of this country.

[*Translation*]

The Vancouver formula applies to the realities of the day and will allow us to build the Canada of tomorrow. At present, it provides that constitutional changes may be made with the consent of Parliament and of two thirds of the provinces comprising at least 50 per cent of the population. However, if the amendment approved by the required majority concerns, first the powers of a provincial legislature to make laws, second the rights and privileges granted or guaranteed by the constitution to the legislature or the government of a province, third the assets or property of a province or, fourth, the natural resources of a province, dissenting provinces may dissociate themselves from the amendment, which would not apply in their case.

● (1530)

[*English*]

I want to emphasize that among those advantages of the Vancouver formula—I draw this to the attention of my colleagues in the New Democratic Party—there is a clear guarantee of natural resource jurisdiction. It is not a guarantee which can be overridden by a referendum triggered unilaterally without any other cause than the will of the Prime Minister. It is a guarantee that will endure. It is a guarantee that provinces can count on unless they choose themselves to surrender or to modify that situation.

The words which I have just used to describe that proposal are drawn from the report to the first ministers by the continuing committee of ministers on the constitution, a committee which I must say was ably co-chaired by the hon. Minister of Justice and by the attorney general of Saskatchewan. There remained some details to work out, especially concerning how to deal with amendments of universal applicability, which cannot be subjected to opting out, whether constitutional provision should be made for the financial implications of opting out of amendments. Those are details. Those are details which can be dealt with.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) and the Minister of Justice propose to use closure to stop Parliament from debating a matter when the government spokesmen have outnumbered the spokesmen of the official opposition. The Minister of Justice is skeptical that we can work out those details. I