

and I think they have two other members from two other provinces. Therefore I submit, Mr. Chairman, that that side of the opposition has not very much of a mandate at this moment.

Mr. Knowles: If the hon. member's arguments are not any better than his arithmetic he had better revise them.

Mr. Richardson: I will take a moment or two, then, to give you the arithmetic. I think you have 22 members in the house. We will say that you have 23 members perhaps. Six of those 23 members were elected on non-minority votes.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

An hon. Member: How many Liberals were elected on minority votes?

Mr. Knowles: On that argument the whole Liberal party should resign today.

Mr. Fleming: The government is a minority government.

Mr. Richardson: Mr. Chairman, the point I am making on the question of public ownership is simply this. Those 22 or 23 members who sit in the house represent, according to the votes that were polled in the election, a minority of the electorate. They polled something in the neighbourhood of 200,000 votes out of how many votes throughout all of Canada? Therefore my proposition is this. Those who argue against this particular proposition at the moment on the ground of public ownership—and I am not against it at the proper time—speak, in my humble view, for relatively few of the people of Canada from the east to the west.

Mr. Hees: You will find out.

An hon. Member: And he speaks against closure.

Mr. Richardson: Somebody has raised the question of closure. I will speak about that.

An hon. Member: You people raised it.

Mr. Richardson: I as a member never interrupted any member on the opposite side except, as I understand it, within the bounds of courtesy. If hon. members opposite do not wish to extend courtesy to me, it is perfectly all right with me.

Mr. Rowe: Go ahead.

Mr. Richardson: As this debate has gone on, Mr. Chairman, I have been thinking how many members on the other side have risen and with a great flow of rhetoric have spoken about the rights of democracy. It is a very simple proposition, as we shall see if we come back to earth. I heard my

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friend the hon. member for Prince Albert today. I heard the Leader of the C.C.F. party last night. I heard him make two or three interjections. For myself as a member of this house I was really amazed that we could get into the attitude of high school children.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Rowe: So were we.

An hon. Member: How long have you been here?

Mr. Richardson: Not very long but I will probably be here long after you have departed.

Mr. Hees: You hope.

The Deputy Chairman: Order.

Mr. Knowles: I hope the hon. member realizes that he is addressing the Chair. That last remark was addressed to the Chair.

Mr. Richardson: Mr. Chairman, I will stand up here for the time allotted to me and if those gentlemen on the other side, in concerted action, want to interrupt me, it is perfectly all right by me. I want to come to a point that evidently most of us in this house have forgotten, namely, that our constitution is the British North America Act. On several occasions while members on the other side have been speaking, while they have said they were directing their thought and time to a proper consideration of this bill, I noted that they have spoken about almost everything they could speak about and still be on their feet, and that not one of them has referred to a cardinal principle in our British North America Act. It is there. Let me put it on the record. It is the basis upon which you and every one of us in this assembly have the right to rise as free men in a democratic group.

An hon. Member: No, we have not.

Mr. Dufresne: This sentence is in the wrong debate.

Mr. Richardson: Mr. Chairman—

Mr. Hodgson: You know you are telling us an untruth.

Mr. Richardson:—no matter what the murmuring may be after I read it, let every one of us, including the speaker who is now on his feet, when this session closes tonight go into his chamber and read again and thoroughly digest this section which I recall for every one. The section is section 49 of the British North America Act. It reads:

Questions arising in the House of Commons shall be decided by a majority of voices—