

minority within minorities, and I have experienced what that means. I know that if the rights of Canadians are not protected by the two main official language groups, then the other minorities will suffer as a consequence.

I do not believe we can count on our provincial governments to protect us in that fashion, and if we are going to wait for the constitution to evolve from unanimous agreement, I do not think I will live long enough to see that day. We have our national anthem, we have our flag and we are mature enough to have our own constitution.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bockstael: I mentioned the hon. member for Provencher. He knows that back in 1957 we were struggling to have our rights in school, I for the people of St. Boniface and he for the Mennonite population in Manitoba. We knew we could not get them, but I worked with people like Thiessen and Wiebe in an effort to make sure we would get those rights. The premier of the province was trying to help us, but the majority would not give them to us. Then we experienced the administration of Premier Edward Schreyer. He took us a long way by bringing in laws which would help the minority have its linguistic rights respected. We are still struggling for those rights and it is laughable to see the Premier of Manitoba saying, on television, "I am looking after the needs of the minorities; they are satisfied". That is not the case.

Today I am speaking from the heart. Hon. members opposite say the debate has lasted only 24 hours, but since October 6, when we started early—and nine days before we were supposed to—all we have seen has been obstructionism and moves to slow down the resolution and its reference to committee. Yesterday we saw the funniest about-face I have ever contemplated in this House. Hon. members opposite now have been presented with the solution.

They were against it; they did not want to do it. They were in favour of patriation and the principle thereof. They were in favour of human rights and the principle thereof. They were in favour of the formula of equalization and the principle thereof. But they did not like the way we were proceeding. They felt we should take a different approach—that this was the wrong time and the wrong place. Then yesterday the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) told us that he had the solution. "We will do it in one shot, it will not take long and we do not even need a committee". He said, "We will do it right here this afternoon; let's go". That is because hon. members opposite have read the will of the Canadian people. The Canadian people want their constitution.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bockstael: As I said earlier, hon. members opposite are posturing for political reasons. They are holding the government back from doing its job, and we have to do it now. We should get the resolution into committee, deal with it seriously and get on with it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Constitution

Mr. Clark: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I wonder if the hon. member would permit a question.

Mr. Bockstael: Yes.

Mr. Clark: While I naturally disagreed with some of the hon. member's concluding comments, I was interested in his proposal that French language and English language rights in education should exist for anyone anywhere in Canada. The hon. member was making a particular reference to people who might move from Quebec, for example, to my constituency in rural western Alberta or from my constituency to Quebec. As I understood him, he was saying that in all cases they should have the right to schooling in the language of the majority language region they left. I wonder if the hon. member intends to introduce an amendment to the resolution to make the resolution have the effect he says he seeks.

Mr. Bockstael: Mr. Speaker, I do not believe I used the words "in all cases". Having been a school trustee and recognizing the existence of economic common sense, I know that it should be where numbers justify. That is the way I feel.

Mr. McDermid: Who decides the numbers?

Mr. Kilgour: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Would the parliamentary secretary permit a second question if there is a moment of his time left?

Mr. Bockstael: Yes.

● (2140)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): The hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Kilgour) on a point of order.

Mr. Kilgour: Mr. Speaker, I will put my question in English. As somebody who was also born in Manitoba, I wonder if the parliamentary secretary, who spoke of the Manitoba school question, is aware of the fact that the Manitoba school act—which was an unjust act, I quite agree with him—was enacted after two demagogic speeches in Portage la Prairie in 1889? I am sure he is aware of those speeches. Does he not think that section 42 is precisely the sort of instrument that a demagogue, like Dalton McCarthy or Joseph Martin, who gave those speeches in Portage la Prairie, would love to have in our constitution so they could do the same thing to a minority as the Manitoba Liberal government did in 1890 to the French-speaking minority?

Mr. Bockstael: Mr. Speaker, I agree with our leader that section 42 is a system to unblock a bottleneck. It will be invoked in that sense because we have evidence of 53 years of bottlenecks with the provinces.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. John Gamble (York North): Mr. Speaker, I am one of the fortunate and privileged members of the House. I have still 20 minutes in which to address the House and express my views with respect to a matter of supreme national concern.