

Supply

should be serious about the discussion today on that motion and I would call for a quorum count.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): I would point out to the hon. member for Hull—Aylmer that I recognized representatives from the Bloc Québécois on four occasions. Having said that, I find that we have a quorum.

The hon. member for Saint-Maurice on a point of order.

Mr. Pronovost: Mr. Speaker, I just heard in this House, only a few seconds ago, some very insulting comments with regard to the Chair. The member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie told you, and I quote: “I will settle your hash, you Mr. Speaker, in the next election”! These remarks are completely unacceptable. I ask immediately the member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie, who is present in this House, to take back what he said.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): I recognize again the member for Saint-Maurice on a point of order.

Mr. Pronovost: Mr. Speaker, I want to be sure the member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie has really heard what I said. We did hear very clearly, on this side of the House, that he questioned your authority. He directly challenged you, saying: “I will settle your hash—

An hon. member: In the next election!

Mr. Pronovost: —in the next election”! We heard him. He has questioned the authority of the Speaker of this House. It is something absolutely unacceptable, Mr. Speaker, and I ask him to take back immediately what he said.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Is the hon. member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie seeking the floor?

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie): I made no public comment in this House. I was talking to you. I have nothing else to say.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Resuming debate. The hon. member for St. John's East.

[*English*]

Mr. Reid: Mr. Speaker, the question I ask is, where do we go from here? As I was saying, we have seen Allaire, we await Bélanger-Campeau. Six or seven provinces have started the process of consultation on the future of the Constitution and the amending process in their own provinces.

In this House of Commons and the Senate, we have undertaken the process of considering the amending formula and the process of changing our Constitution and what that does.

It is my belief that the people of Quebec have a far greater sense of where they want to go and what they want to do than, perhaps, the rest of Canada does. I think it is absolutely incumbent upon us, as Canadians, to decide exactly what it is we want to do. The first step is to decide as Canadians if we want a country. My own view is that we do want a country and one of the most integral parts of that country is the province and the people of Quebec.

Second, I think we have to decide what it will look like. That involves a process to which we have been a little adverse. That is the process of each of us defining and deciding, individually and collectively, I guess, in the end, what it means to be Canadian. It is that perception of the country that must guide what this Constitution is going to be.

As my friend from Sherbrooke said earlier: “A constitution is a mirror of the country”. It is absolutely essential that we build a Constitution through a consensus that reflects the needs of Canada in 1991 and into the next century and that Constitution not be based on a series of principles so, therefore, we define the country based on the Constitution.

As well, a part of that has to clearly be our history. How did we get here? What has happened to this country, not only in the last 125 years, but also in the last 400 or 500 years, as we moved towards 1997, which is a big anniversary in our history.

The third question is, how do we get there? First of all, as Canadians, what we must stop doing is looking at the future development of our Constitution and our country in terms of what Quebec wants or what we are going to give Quebec. That will lead us nowhere and it is not the approach that is going to find a solution to this problem.