

*Government Orders*

am pleased that some of the provinces have committed to that goal.

I would also like to repeat that our party's first proposal for greater equity and representation for women and minorities in a new Senate is a system of proportional representation. We will continue to consider that a viable and important alternative.

The New Democratic Party will also continue to support the concerns of the ethnocultural community. Many within that community feel their rights have not been adequately addressed in this agreement. They perceive a weakness in the Canada clause and they are concerned about the notwithstanding clause. Our party, as we expressed in the Dobbie-Beaudoin report, shares that concern. These are outstanding issues that cannot be put to rest but must be dealt with.

The same is true for the disabled who for some reason have been totally excluded from the Canada clause. They must receive the same protection, the same equal treatment as others in our society.

These issues must become a part of the debate that is to be held. The Constitution is a living document. Discussions will continue. There is certainly nothing in this agreement that prohibits us from continuing and updating the Constitution and that is something we must continue to do.

Finally, let me acknowledge there are some Canadians who are concerned that this constitutional accord restricts the ability of the national government to maintain and introduce social programs. In my view this is not the case. For example, if there is a government committed to a national child care program, as I understand this accord, that government could put one in place, but what is required is the political will.

This accord is not perfect. It is a real step forward for Canada. I look forward to the referendum campaign when we will have the opportunity and indeed the responsibility to explain the accord to Canadians.

It is time to put aside partisanship and rigid ideologies and consider how best to serve Canada's future. I want to emphasize that throughout this campaign we must listen

to Canadians who have concerns about this agreement. We must not minimize those concerns.

The atmosphere must be one of understanding. There is no room for bitterness, hostility or alienation. As politicians we should be encouraging and developing forums where Canadians can express their views, forums of real public debate which include those with divergent views.

Whatever the result is come October 26, we will have to work together as a nation to address the other issues confronting Canadians in their daily lives: jobs, their families and their economic future.

Let us remember in all of this that despite its flaws, Canada is a great success and a very fortunate nation. About a year and a half ago, I met the President of Mozambique who spoke of the economic devastation in his country, the famine, the war. Then he said to me with great kindness: "I understand you are having your problems here too". I have to admit I was a bit embarrassed and it certainly helped to put our problems in context.

At the same time as we deal with our difficulties, and they are real and we must deal with them, let us celebrate what we have been given and what we have achieved.

Canada is truly a remarkable nation. We have the opportunity to be a true model to others, a model of diverse peoples and cultures coming together, living together and building something worth while together.

The author, Roch Carrier, recently expressed a view that I believe a vast majority of Canadians in all parts of Canada share. He wrote: "I am more comfortable in a grand dream like Canada than in a narrow park where everybody speaks like me, has a pale face like mine and feels threatened by anybody not like me". Let us embrace that grand dream. Let us embrace Canada. Let us say yes to a renewed Canada on October 26.

**Mr. Speaker:** Shall I call it five o'clock?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Speaker:** It being five o'clock p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 30(6) the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business, as listed on today's Order Paper.