

*Private Members' Business*

concern for their basic financial security, so that we are sure that the way they are treated on Grandparents' Day is the way they are treated every day.

I will conclude by saying that in addition to the idyllic images of grandparents that we often see on television, the traditional families, but there are also much more difficult situations. Grandparents are often excluded from family life and live alone in cramped quarters, and I think the setting aside of a national grandparents' day, as with everything to do with the family, would be an opportunity to recognize that there is no one model of a family, any more than there is no one type of grandparent. These seniors have contributed in a variety of ways to the growth of our society.

I hope that by recognizing grandparents' day we will make it possible for values to be transmitted from one generation to another, that we will realize what the past has given us and what we must still seek in order to attain our vision of the future, and it is for these reasons that the members of the Bloc Québécois support this bill.

[English]

**Mr. Julian Reed (Halton—Peel, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to second the bill on grandparents day, declaring the second Sunday in September every year national grandparents day.

• (1750)

Earlier this month I introduced a bill which would declare 1995 the year of the grandparent. I believe this is the third time this year grandparents have been recognized by various parties in the House. During the last debate, on May 2 of this year, there was a unanimous endorsement of that private member's bill.

It was rather disappointing that the committee assessing the bill considered it non-votable. Whether the arguments I put to the committee were not convincing enough, I am not sure. Perhaps I should bear some responsibility for that. Nevertheless, the feelings in the House crossed all party lines, a rare occurrence. I wonder whether in this, the third instance of recognition of grandparents this year, the hackneyed phrase family values has again risen to the fore in our society.

In the debate on May 2 there some statements registered very strongly with me. One was that grandparents are a pillar of our existence. I had the privilege of having one grandparent whose strength and values were imparted to me as strongly as those of my parents. He was a pillar of my existence.

I have underlined showing the way by example. Grandparents do their very best in leading by way of example. They impart those examples to their grandchildren. The word wisdom caught my attention. Grandparents are most often much wiser than

parents because of the accumulation of experience and the way they can interpret life for their grandchildren.

Another word which came up was tolerance. As we grow older we tend to be either more tolerant or less tolerant. I have found the grandparents of our children and my own grandfather had tolerance. They set the standard for tolerance.

They provide strength and enrich the family. When things go wrong, as they often do in family life, grandparents are often a source of strength and security. Children need to feel secure on a continuing basis. It cannot be a start and stop affair or catch as catch can. Very often grandparents can fill the role of providing security. That leads me to one of the great concerns all of us in the House share. With the divorce rate and the break-up of families very often grandparents at the present time find themselves without access to their grandchildren.

• (1755)

I will be doing everything I can to make sure that state is changed so grandparents in future will be able to have proper access to grandchildren especially at the time in their lives when they need them so badly.

Other words I found are grace and dignity. I have talked about family strength. The grandfather I had a great experience with lived by a very strict code. He imposed a code of conduct on himself, for which he was admired by so many in the small community where we lived.

He did not always preach about it. He did not always try to impose it, although sometimes he looked with wonderment at the way the world seemed to change. We all agree the more things change, the more they remain the same.

As I get older I find myself more appreciative of that code my grandfather imparted to me. I hope some of that has by example been shared with our children who did not know that great-grandfather.

They also knew grandparents; they grew up with more grandparents than I had. Those grandparents were wonderful people in the way they helped our family, the graciousness with which they accepted responsibility we often imposed on them when they took care of our children, when we needed them.

Grandparents have a much stronger role to play in family life than society has acknowledged to this point. The year 1995, with the recognition and debate we have put forward in the House, should set the stage for the years to come as recognizing the importance of the family and the role grandparents have in it.

**Mr. Dick Harris (Prince George—Bulkley Valley, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on Bill C-274, proposing to make the second Sunday of September every year national grandparents day.