

too much energy on what divides us. Maybe it is time now, Mr. Speaker, as they report: "Canadians now need things of a positive nature, things that we can reflect on with pride and identify with as symbols of our Canadianism, things that are Canadian". That is what these people talked about.

The Canada clause which identifies many of the values associated with being Canadian is an essential ingredient of our new Constitution. That is what this committee felt. They said: "Canada, geographically one of the largest nations on earth, is beautiful and diverse, abundantly endowed by nature, with a fascinating history, a rich multicultural fabric, a democratic history and a caring social tradition that we are proud to call our home".

They went on to discuss a number of other things. I do not have time tonight to get into all the details, but they brought in a report that suggested the Senate should have equal representation from the provinces as well as the territories. They felt that could be balanced out by including in the votes that take place in the Senate the rule that the votes must represent 50 per cent of the population. They felt that was a way of balancing out the difficulty with the Senate. I think that has a lot of merit.

They also mentioned another interesting aspect. Through their debates and discussions toward the end of the process they recognized that when they talked about the provinces they were really including the territories. They felt that this was a good time to bring the territories closer to provincial status in this country.

There was obviously much concern about the aboriginal situation and their right to self-government. Because of our affiliation with the aboriginal people in Georgina Island there was a lot of love and respect for what this group of Canadians has done. My committee group felt that self-government should be addressed on an individual basis, on a band-by-band basis, but at a much quicker pace. They do not want to wait for 10 years, they want to do something now if the band is ready and able to do so. They really felt it should be the responsibility of the band to do that.

There are a number of suggestions that they made, as I said, relating to virtually all the proposals. I am sorry that I am not going to be able to get into all the details of

them tonight in the time allowed me. But I do want to say that these people worked very hard and were very honoured and privileged to appear before the joint parliamentary committee yesterday. They really feel that they have been part of the process.

I want to conclude with a letter from one of my constituents, Mr. Sergeant of Bradford. This is what he says:

Am I going to sit back and let someone take a piece of my country away from me? Or am I going to fight for it like they do in other countries? I think it is time we all stood up for Canada. I have had enough; I think it is time to put an end to this Quebec separation once and for all. I am a man of English heritage. I married a girl of French heritage. We were both born and raised in Toronto and together we raised seven children. Would we not represent both sides in thought, heritage and country?

He asked me if it would help for him to get involved because, he said, "We are prepared to go to Quebec and talk to those people in Quebec and convince them of the need to keep one united, strong country together".

Mr. Speaker, the people of York—Simcoe have been heard and I am very proud to be able to represent them tonight. I will table their report.

Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, "Canada is a society of freedom, tolerance and compassion". This is the message in the opening of the new federal government constitutional proposals entitled *Shaping Canada's Future Together*.

I would like to say at the outset that my party, under my leader Mr. Jean Chrétien, has earlier stated the framework upon which we will examine the final package to be presented in this House.

• (2130)

Let me just mention a few of them. We would like a Canada that will set out the will of Canadians to live together in a federal state, the principles of which we would like to be sharing together.

We would like a Canada committed to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to preserve and strengthen fundamental rights and freedoms.

We would like a Canada with a strengthened economic union where barriers between provinces would be removed. We would like a Canada where the division of powers exists which best serves the needs of people, not governments or bureaucrats or politicians, and a system