

like about westerners; they are not afraid to say they are proud to be Canadian. Whether you are in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan or Manitoba, that is what Canada is all about.

I would like to say something with respect to the all-important aspect of entrenching rights, which is one of the main questions in this debate. I live in northern New Brunswick, which borders *la belle province de Québec*, on the banks of the Restigouche River, and I went to the school board so that my sons could learn the second language. And, yes, some 15 years ago I was told: No, but we might allow you to put them in an immersion course; we only need 16 students and if we could just borrow your son he would round out the members for the class. I had no intention of accepting that. I wanted my sons to go into a pure French class and to really get the feel of the second language, the French language. I am happy to tell you that because of my perseverance I won my case with the school board and all my sons have gone through the elementary classes—right up to grade 7—in French, not in an immersion class but in a pure French class. And my three sons are beautifully bilingual today. That is what I believe in.

[Translation]

When I was young I did not have the opportunity to learn French, the second language of our country, because our schools were English.

Mr. Speaker, for a long time in my public life I have supported the position of the Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) in so far as the Acadians of New Brunswick are concerned. Yes, I will defend the Acadians of New Brunswick! Yes, I will defend the basic rights of the French language in the constitution! That is my position, without reservation!

[English]

That is why I am very pleased to have the privilege of standing in my place tonight to say that this is what I have offered and told my people we would work for—not only for the rights of language, but for cultural, educational and all the other fundamental rights which we have been talking about and which are so very important to the future. That is the aspect which is important to the future survival of this country. We do not have to go around drumming or dreaming up some imaginary story in order to spook or scare Canadians about what is going to happen in this country.

I implore all members of this House to show some respect for this institution, to try to see the other members' points of view. Many of us have had the opportunity to travel outside Canada. I am sure that you, Mr. Speaker, are aware of the feeling you have when you return to Canada, where we have freedom, where we can walk the streets without fear for life and safety. That is the greatest aspect of this country and one we should preserve and protect. I do not need to delay the House by enumerating all the countries where you cannot do that. I just wanted to draw attention to it tonight because I have had occasion to travel in other countries and am so delighted to get back to Canada. When you see people getting down to kiss the very soil, you recognize that that is the feeling

you have when you come back to this great country. We know the reasons why we are proud to be Canadian. It is because of the rights we have and because we are willing to take up our responsibilities and accept our duty. We intend to see to it that once the constitution is back we will have free debate.

Mr. Speaker, we see the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) saying, one minute, that he agrees we should bring back the constitution. The next minute he is saying he doesn't like the way we are approaching the situation. He should make up his mind.

Let me conclude with a quotation from the Institute of Research on Public Policy. It says:

The problem has been that in recent years the traditional economic links between the Canadian provinces have been eroding. In my opinion that erosion could, if not reversed, threaten our very survival as a nation.

If we are to succeed in our quest for a strengthened nation and a renewed Canada then we must begin by making a commitment and a conscious decision not only to rework constitutional arrangements but to build solid economic relationships among the regions of Canada. We need a new set of economic and political relationships which can accommodate our existing strengths across the country—in the maritimes, in Quebec, in Ontario and in the west—in such a way that we reinforce each other in a genuine partnership that creates a stronger and more united whole and a more united country.

In concluding, I hope we will not abuse the rules of this House and not abuse the television coverage that is going out to the people in such a way that the only word that can be applied is "misleading". It is misleading in almost every aspect on all fronts with respect to the subject matter which we have been debating since we returned from the summer recess. What I would like to see is a sensible, realistic approach to the responsibilities and the work which we are called upon to do here.

● (2330)

While we are talking about rights—and it does not matter whether I take the time on a question of privilege or a point of order or on another occasion—what about the question of television within this House? As a result of television, this House is no longer what it once was. In many instances, it is now a television studio. One of the deals was that we would not have editing or abuses of the service of bringing the message to Canadians which they are perfectly entitled to receive. Now members opposite want to extend television beyond the House into other areas. But that subject might best be left for debate at some other time. I cannot recall that during the short time I have been here we have debated the pros and cons of televising the debates of this House or agreed that we would allow people and the media outside the chamber to play with the debates. That is not my understanding of the original plan. We will have a chance to come back to this matter another time. However, it is an example of people treading upon other people's rights and of people misleading other people. It is divisive and a great threat to this country and it is something which I, in the coming months and years, will work to correct.

In the meantime I would like to express my appreciation to at least some of the members who have courteously allowed me to express myself in this free, democratic institution. I would hope that as we go on to the work in committee and as