

be managed piecemeal; it must apply equally to everyone. That is why we say there must be a regional majority to respect Canada as it really is. On the other hand, one part of Canada should not be excluded, because then the referendum debate and vote would be virtually meaningless.

I would have liked the bill to be more appropriate and spending to be better controlled. What will happen? The mechanism or vehicle may be defective, but the important thing in a referendum is that the ultimate verdict will be given by each citizen freely voting on this country that we believe in. That is what we have always proposed.

The bill is not perfect. Personally, I would like some parts of it to be changed. Some concerns have been expressed. But from the beginning, we wanted to co-operate with the government. In fact, as I said at the outset, if you take the plan as it was presented yesterday by the Minister Responsible for Constitutional Affairs, everything that we submitted in writing and that was adopted by the Liberal Party in all regions of Canada appeared in the House of Commons report and again in the minister's announcement. What gives us great satisfaction is that the reservations we mentioned—

[*English*]

We had some elements we disagreed with in the Beaudoin report. We were not at the table, but the premiers and their representatives and the negotiations have retained some of our objectives. We did that because we felt it was important.

Take the matter of culture. We have to maintain the right to help all Canadians in that field. Of course, the mechanism could be different because it was not in the Constitution, but we gave a better definition.

It is the same thing with energy. We thought there should be a national say in the energy policies of the land. Why be together if we cannot take a national interest when it is needed from this Parliament?

We made a lot of progress. I am happy with that. I understand why the Bloc Québécois does not want to vote, but I do not understand why all other members of Parliament do not want to vote together. We started to work together. We made our proposal and we fought very hard. It is unbelievable to have the New Democratic Party running away when we want to hear the voice of

the people. When they cannot make the distinction between the forest and the trees, it is absolutely unbelievable.

• (1110)

Politically I am happy because when I travel in Canada I will say: "These are the people he does not want to be consulted in a national referendum". That is good for me, but it is bad for the country that they cannot elevate themselves high enough to have the three major parties agree on a bill. Even if it is not a perfect bill, it is the bill that will be the cause of one of the greatest days of Canada.

On that day in Canada we will all get up and we will walk to the polls. On that day Canadians will decide to be together for the next century. The people of English Canada will get up and will say: "Let us go to the polls and say yes to Quebec. Let us say yes to a new Canada". The people of Quebec will get up and say: "Yes, we want to stay in Canada because it is the best solution for us".

It will be a great night when all together the different parties of people who believe in this country will have given birth to the Canada of the 21st century.

My members will vote for this bill. We asked the government to say clearly that when the referendum is held we will not proceed if we do not have a majority from the four regions of Canada. We want the government to understand that we never propose a referendum just to push the premiers around, to have a solution, but to have ratification by every citizen. They will be able to go, as I said, and say despite of all the problems arising and all the problems we will have in the future, we are still number one. It is worth fighting for it. That is why we are all in this House.

I hope the referendum will be held in this land this year and the future will be great for what I consider to be the biggest and best country of the world, our beloved Canada.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois):** I would like to point out to the House that yesterday's *Votes and Proceedings* contain several errors in the list of votes. Because of major computer problems that are still unexplained, the printed lists do not reflect accurately the notes given to the Clerk during last evening's votes.