

The Address

Mr. Harvard: Maybe you should move to east Los Angeles.

[Translation]

Mrs. Venne: Mr. Speaker, my colleague certainly has a well-developed sense of humour, but I would like to tell you about the famous 28-day waiting period.

In Quebec now, applications are mostly processed on time. Since the hon. member is from Saskatchewan, I think he should put pressure in that area. In my province, anyway, it is going very well.

As for the firearms handling certificate, in Quebec, we have a hunter's certificate. To go hunting, you need that certificate, which is good for two years. So that is a difference between Saskatchewan and our province, because it seems to me that they do not need a hunting certificate, since as he said, people have gone hunting for years without ever taking a course on handling firearms. In our province, you must take a course on handling firearms to obtain the certificate.

In closing, I wanted to say that there may be big differences between his province and ours in the way the laws are applied, unfortunately.

[English]

Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, first allow me to echo the sentiments of my colleagues who have risen before me in this House and congratulate you on your appointment.

This new government faces a great number of daunting tasks, not the least of which is how to give Canadians a reason to believe in the dedication, perseverance and sound ethical judgment of their elected leaders.

Each of us was sent to this House because our constituents believe that we are the men and women most firmly committed to their concerns, their needs and their demands. However, we are more than our individual selves and we are more than our collective individual voices. We were elected to represent in this Parliament the collective voice of our constituents reconciling their competing and at times conflicting visions with the others.

The aim of Canada's House of Commons is not to serve the selfish and parochial interests of any one person or province to the detriment of others. It is to advance the well-being and prosperity of the whole country and therefore of all Canadians.

We were elected on this side of the House to fulfil the Liberal vision which was clearly articulated in our election platform, the red book "Creating Opportunity".

Everyday in my riding of Winnipeg North I talk with honest, hard working people eager to put their faith in hard working and honest politicians. For five solid years, from 1988 when I was first elected until last fall's election, I had fear.

I had a fear that 1.6 million Canadians, the unemployed in this country would remain jobless. I had a fear that the poor, particularly children, would continue to depend on social assistance. I had a fear that the sick, the elderly and all Canadians for that matter would continue to face the consequence of a threatened medicare system and the uncertainty that goes with it. I had a fear that the minorities, be it due to race, colour or creed and the disabled would continue to face unfair treatment and discrimination in the workplace.

I had a fear that the infrastructure of cities and municipalities would continue to decay without help from the federal government. I had a fear that the safety and security of persons and property would continue to be in peril. I had a fear that honesty and integrity in government would never be restored. I had a fear that Canada would close its doors to immigrants.

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Last but not least I had a fear that Canada my adopted country and home to some 27 million Canadians was on the brink of national collapse. However, I had always hoped that my fears would not come to pass.

Now I am certain that there is much hope for this great nation. I have hope because this government has already taken significant strides to enhance its integrity by rejecting many of the unessential privileges parliamentarians had exercised for so many years during their tenures as public servants.

I have hope because each political party represented in this House has already voiced its commitment to seeking consultation from the public on a wide range of issues of great national importance.

I have hope because the finance minister has already made good on this commitment by talking to people across the country in an effort to formulate a federal budget that is both sensible and sensitive. I am confident that the minister will continue in the short number of days remaining before budget day to consult with all Canadians from all walks of life.

We must never let ourselves forget that each time we make fiscal decisions here in Ottawa we may be affecting the wallets and pocketbooks and the day to day budgets of individual citizens in ridings like yours and mine.

I have hope because this government promptly cancelled the questionable deal that was to lead to the privatization of portions of Toronto's Pearson airport.

I have hope because this government does not believe in allowing its leader to jet around in a \$53 million VIP aircraft or a Porsche while many Canadians scramble to make both ends meet.

I have hope because this government has already put its infrastructure program into motion.