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than for non-aboriginal people. That difference is even more pronounced in the age group between 15 and 25.

The country simply cannot afford to lose another generation of aboriginal people who are able and willing to make a contribution to this country. The people of British Columbia have told their government to get on with it and negotiate fair and just agreements that protect the rights of both aboriginal and non-aboriginal people alike. They want to establish a stable economic climate, which in turn will help to bring investment dollars and opportunities to all British Columbians.

In 1993, speaking in favour of the legislation creating the B.C. Treaty Commission, Mr. Jack Weisgerber recounted his experience in 1989 as a member of the premier's advisory council on native affairs: "It became clear to us, as we travelled and met with groups around the province, that if we were going to address the root of the social and economic problems we had to deal with the land claims question". Those words were from a man who now leads the Reform Party in British Columbia, words echoed by members of all parties in the B.C. legislature when that body passed its own enabling legislation. I commend to my friends across the floor today those words, which we now have the opportunity to honour through our actions.

The history of this legislation is the story of partnership between cultures, between political parties, between generations. Let us continue in that same spirit of partnership now as we open the way for a brighter future for all British Columbians and a prouder day for Canadians.

I would also like to comment on some things the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville said. Again from the same paper: "We are giving tax exemptions to anybody who carries an Indian treaty card. They do not have to pass a DNA test". That is an insult to all aboriginal people across the country or anybody of colour.

• (1055)

Does that mean that if I say I am an Inuk this person expects me to pass a DNA test? Does that mean that my colleague from Vancouver Centre, if she says she is a certain colour, has to pass a DNA test in order to prove to the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville that she is the colour she is?

This is part of the Reform Party. By the way, DNA does not tell what colour the person is. The ignorance of some of the members of the third party is appalling, to say the least.

Again, this is what the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville said: "The general public does not know the sellout that is taking place". Who is selling out? The aboriginal people from British Columbia have been in British Columbia for in the neighbourhood of 36,000 years.

When British Columbia joined Confederation in 1871, the aboriginal people of British Columbia were in the majority in British Columbia. What did the government, when B.C. joined Confederation, do? It passed a law forbidding the aboriginal people of British Columbia to vote.

The Speaker: We will pick up the debate a little later. It being 11 a.m., we will now proceed to Statements by Members.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ELECTION

Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Nunatsiak, Lib.):

[Editor's Note: Member spoke in Inuktitut.]

[English]

Mr. Speaker, on Monday the last general election of the undivided Northwest Territories was held. Twenty-four men and women, many of them newcomers, will form the 13th NWT legislative assembly.

I congratulate all those who were elected and extend to them best wishes for a productive, creative and successful term in office. I salute as well all the candidates who ran in this election for their courage and commitment to their people and their communities.

This new assembly faces challenges unlike any assembly before it. The task is great, but I have every confidence in the ability of these people of the north to pull together and work together. Through co-operation and mutual respect we will build a stronger north and a stronger Canada.

[Editor's Note: Member spoke in Inuktitut.]

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[Translation]

PATRIATION OF THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. Jean Landry (Lotbinière, BQ): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Marc Lalonde, a former Liberal minister and an old fellow traveller of the Prime Minister's, stated that the federalists did not have to apologize for unilaterally patriating the constitution in 1982.

Is it Quebecers' fault that the federalists patriated the Canadian constitution without Quebec's agreement and despite the opposition of all parties in the National Assembly? Is it Quebecers' fault that all efforts to bring Quebec back into the Canadian family fold failed, that the rest of Canada rejected the Meech Lake accord, that they felt too much was given to Quebec in the Charlottetown accord?