

Government Orders

sector basis. Otherwise we will be punishing one community while other communities get a free ride. That is wrong.

Do we want to punish the cultural community and let the very wealthy people have the ability to send their kids to ivy league universities where they get tax credits or estate tax redemptions of up to \$600,000 on property in the United States? It does not work.

I want to come at the bill from another point of view, what cultural properties contribute to the tourism sector. I will give a specific example of a museum in Toronto which I know the Speaker is very familiar with, Canada's Hockey Hall of Fame. This is an example of a museum that celebrates the cultural soul of the country, hockey.

About three weeks ago I had the opportunity of going through the Hockey Hall of Fame. I was absolutely blown away by the historical relics on display, with the feeling one gets as one goes through the hall of fame and looks at the history of hockey, its contribution in terms of job creation in hockey, the celebration of those magical moments in great Stanley Cup goals and so on. One walks out of that building with a sense of pride which I cannot describe on the floor of the House.

• (1255)

There is another feature to this museum on which we are not dwelling. It is relevant to all museums, all cultural property establishments across Canada. These are tourism assets. The spinoff we bring to our community when we celebrate and package our cultural properties is phenomenal. What industries are affected by these tourism assets? We are talking about hotels and restaurants. We are talking about replicas of these assets manufactured in small craft shops. These cultural property assets and historic museums exist right across the country.

I have been glancing through "On the Road to Quebec", a guide to the sightseeing attractions in Quebec. We are on the eve of a very important decision in our country. As I was going through this guide I could not help but feel emotional about some of the great cultural and historic sights and assets in Quebec. There is a litany of sights, tourist attractions and properties that celebrate the great history and the great contributions Quebec has made to Canada. Just going through those assets in Quebec right now alone make the bill worthy of merit.

I believe many Canadians right now are listening to these debates in the House because we are going through a very fragile time in our country's history. Many members are receiving calls in their offices by people concerned about the referendum on Monday. This is no secret. There have been many newscasts on television and radio and many newspaper articles stating that things are very fragile right now.

To Canadians not living in Quebec, if ever there was a time when they could celebrate the great cultural assets in Quebec, try to travel this weekend to Quebec to visit and celebrate some of these great Canadian cultural assets all over Quebec, especially in the outlying regions. We have great centres where our history and cultural assets are celebrated. This would be the weekend for Canadians, if they could find the time, to go and visit these centres, these communities and these small hamlets. While they are there they can go to the local manor, the local inn, stay for the weekend, talk to the community and express to them our hope and our wish that on Monday they vote for Canada.

• (1300)

If a lot of Canadians did something like that, they would be making a great contribution in making themselves feel comfortable in another region of their country, and probably the Quebecers would welcome it. It has been my experience that the hospitality that Quebecers show, especially to people from outside their province, is first class—the restaurants, the inns, all the activities that go on in Quebec.

I want to reflect for a second on the experience you and I have both had, Mr. Speaker, as fathers whose sons played in the Quebec pee-wee tournament, another great celebration we have in our country. Young boys from all across Canada go to Quebec City every February, a majority of them unilingual English, and play in the Quebec pee-wee tournament. One of the unique features of that Quebec pee-wee tournament is the fact that each and every member of the teams from across Canada lives with a family in a home in Quebec City.

We both know, Mr. Speaker, that there is a very special feeling, a very special emotional attachment that stays with those young men when they finish that tournament and come home to their communities right across Canada. This tournament, which has been going on for almost 80 years now, has been one of the unique experiences young boys celebrate. It is a substantial and concrete example of hockey as a cultural instrument pulling people together in the country.

I have absolutely no difficulty in supporting the bill before the House today. If our culture is strong, if our culture is celebrated in every aspect, our ability to galvanize and stay as a nation increases. In my mind, over the last few years we have had too little celebration, too little promotion of our history, of our culture and all those things that bind us as a nation.

As I mentioned the other day in the House, we have become so preoccupied and so focused on deficit and debt reduction that we are actually melting away some of the glue that has been holding us together as a community and as a country. When we see cultural instruments as just another expense and in the name of deficit and debt we have to cut, we have missed the whole point.