

This is the message that I want to leave with the House. What is most disturbing is that once again the Reform Party is playing right into the hands of the separatist Bloc Quebecois. We do not believe that the leader of the Reform Party is naive. We know that his action is giving a platform to the Bloc to bash federalism. As Liberals, as federalists, as Canadians, we deeply regret that initiative.

[Translation]

This morning, Bloc members rose in the House to complain about comments I made yesterday about their leader's presence at the Citadel on the 50th anniversary of D-Day. What is important, what I said yesterday and what I continue to say is indeed very emotional. When a political party leader comes to Canada's Parliament to try to break it up, it is indeed an emotional issue, but I still defend with all my heart his right to speak because what motivated the soldiers 50 years ago is the absolute and total democracy we see with the presence of the opposition spokespersons. What is worse, Madam Speaker, and perhaps less generous is that the opposition leader sees nothing wrong with travelling around the world to brag about a separate country. He boasts about the fact that in Paris he was welcomed like the leader of a new state but he denies the Canadian government the same opportunity to travel to other countries to find the economic solutions we are looking for here.

• (1530)

The separatists, these so-called defenders of freedom, now want to muzzle any financial or economic institution that does not agree with them. We heard the comments made yesterday by Mr. Parizeau. Today, it is the Bank of Montreal's turn. Tomorrow it could be Wood Gundy. Tomorrow will it be ordinary Quebecers who are denied the right to speak in a debate so critical to our country's future?

[English]

The leader of the Bloc thinks he should be free to travel the world promoting his view of separation in Canada and abroad, but by God, should a minister of the crown dare to go to an OECD meeting to exchange ideas on the economy? Deux poids, deux mesures.

Conspiracy theories, Quebec bashing and Canada bashing make for a few good political points, but they do nothing to solve the country's basic economic problems.

Liberals want to take part in this debate today because we want to concentrate on the fundamental reason we were elected to this Parliament. That is to put Canadians back to work.

[Translation]

Last week, Shawinigan's police chief was in Hamilton, Shawinigan's twin city. We spent the whole day together. You know, Madam Speaker, what struck me and continues to strike me is

*Supply*

that, if you ask young people in Shawinigan, Chicoutimi, the Lac-Saint-Jean region, Hamilton or Toronto what they are looking for, they will tell you they share the same goals.

I am the godmother of a two-year-old girl in Montreal who speaks French at home even though her father is an anglophone. It may surprise some separatists who do not know how Quebecers live but there are such people. Twenty-five French-speaking Liberal members worked here in this House and elsewhere in the country to defend minority rights across this beautiful country of ours. Do you think that, on the day that Canada ceases to exist, minorities will still have rights? Do you think that the millions of francophones now living in Timmins, Sudbury, Haileybury, New Brunswick, or Saint-Albert, will have a say in the new political reality?

Madam Speaker, why not work here together on issues affecting all our young people, work hard to try to renew our social assets, our human resources, because one thing is obvious: If you are about to get training in Montreal, Toronto or Vancouver, the current system does not work. But instead of letting both sides of the House work together, all the Bloc does is put up roadblocks and whine; they refuse to accept anything good just because it comes from the federal government.

[English]

The saddest thing is that if you scrape away all the politics, if you scrape away the regional infighting, if you talk to a young person in Lethbridge, Red Deer or Dawson Creek, they share the same dreams. They share the same needs as the young people in Chicoutimi or Chibougamau.

• (1535)

The unfortunate tone and nature of this debate is that the Reform Party and the Bloc seem to believe that by carving up the country into linguistic pieces or geographic pieces, somehow we will make the nation better. What they do not understand is that any nation that wants to build for the future has to understand its past. Look at the reality of Canada.

[Translation]

Why? Why are we recognized throughout the world as a generous nation? It is because we decided, at the very beginning of our history, in our Constitution, to create a country with the two founding nations, and this is a fundamental element of who we are today.

Why do we have laws on firearms which differ greatly from those of our American neighbour? It is because we believed, at the beginning of our history, that both the individual and the community, not the individual alone, must define the priorities for our society.

And the role of the community was enshrined in the Constitution itself, in 1867. Yes, there were problems. We lived and we continue to live difficult periods. But this is like a marriage: