

Supply

program spending and fulfil the obligation of any civilized society to care for those who cannot care for themselves.

I challenge members of the House, the leaders and elected representatives of the people of Canada, to work together to build a new Canada to meet the challenges of the 21st century, including managed essential social programs secured for this and future generations of citizens.

[Translation]

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Madam Speaker, before I begin my speech, I want to inform the House that government members will be dividing their allotted time into 10-minute speeches and 5-minute periods for questions and comments, except ministers who will take up all of the allotted time pursuant to the Standing Orders.

I have had the honour of representing the people of Saint-Léonard since 1984. During that time, I have never forgotten for one minute that, since the birth of Canada, generation after generation of members have sat in this House to express their pride and their confidence in Canada.

These men and women, of different ages and different backgrounds, also come from the various regions that make up one of the largest countries in the world. Too few of them represented in the past or represent today the people who lived here hundreds of years before the first European even set foot on this continent.

All of these people, whose memories are still with us here, today, belonged to different political parties which took part in some pretty vicious sparring matches. As you know, Madam Speaker, unanimity is not the rule in this House. It is more the exception. However, members who sat in this House until recently all shared the same desire to serve their constituents and to contribute to the growth and unity of Canada.

In time of peace as in time of war, in time of prosperity as in time of economic crisis, every generation of members has strived to make Canada one of the most prosperous, peaceful and admired countries in the world.

Our sovereignty as a nation and our maturity as a society have gradually, patiently and relentlessly been built by those who believed in the rule of law, the invincibility of justice and respect for our differences, those who know the value of experience, efforts, destiny and solidarity. It is now our turn to add to this magnificent institution designed by our predecessors who also laid out the foundations.

Whether we were born in Senneterre or in Siculiana, in Saskatchewan or in Sicily, whether we speak English with a

Bonaventure accent or French with a Berlitz accent, in our own way, we all say the same thing.

• (1220)

Like thousands of other hon. members before us and like millions of Canadians, we say that, today and yesterday, this is the country that we love, this is the great and magnificent country that we want to protect.

Since the last election, there is in this House a group of members whose numbers are large enough to form the Official Opposition and whose ambition is to put an end to the Canadian experiment. I respect unreservedly and unhesitatingly the decision of many Quebec constituents to send separatist members here, in Ottawa.

All Bloc Quebecois members were elected here as were the members of the Liberal Party, of the Reform Party and of other political groupings. These federal separatist members speak, sometimes with emotion, of the need to protect bilingualism in the Canadian Armed Forces and to take care of our Canadian publishers. But nobody in this House nor elsewhere in Canada has any illusion about the real objectives of the Bloc Quebecois. The Bloc Quebecois does not say this in so many words, but what they want is to destroy Canada, since Canada without Quebec will not be Canada any more.

The Bloc members claim to be good surgeons. They want us to believe that, with the help of the PQ, their big brother, they would be able to painlessly sever one of the parts of the Canadian Federation. The operation could be a success; the only problem is that the patient, that is Canada, will die.

Now, these few members of the Bloc are protesting their temporary patriotism, even boasting about it. This is the first stage of the surgical operation they want to do. This is what I call the anaesthetic.

But I can assure you that nobody will be beguiled by this. Quebecers, the sons and daughters of explorers, of discoverers, of inventors will never turn their backs on the country which gave them the freedom, the wealth and the dignity to grow up and develop.

I think that the presence among us, in this Parliament, of members who claim to be able to represent Her Majesty's loyal opposition while working towards the break-up of Canada could have a beneficial effect on all Canadians, particularly on Quebecers. By reminding us every day of what we could lose as Quebecers if Canada broke up, members of the Bloc, who are allies of the *Parti québécois*, help us to better appreciate the value of our Canadian citizenship.

And because of the presence here of separatist members, all Canadians are finally becoming aware that Canada's unity and the preservation of our cultural heritage and of our economic security are not a problem unique to Quebec.

In the 1980 referendum, a majority of Quebecers reiterated their attachment to Canada before the whole world. Of course, we have important problems to solve, and a lot of these stem directly from the relationship between Quebec and the rest of Canada, but the Bloc is not a remedy for Quebec's problems. It