

question, I think you would find unanimous consent in the Chamber for that deferral.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gauthier: Madam Speaker, I confirm there have been consultations between all parties. We are agreeable to the vote on today's opposition motion, presented by the Liberal caucus, being deferred until Monday. I would like to ask the government, and perhaps the third party's whip, whether they would agree, considering it is now twelve noon, to let the House sit during lunch time, so that more members will have a chance to take part in the important debate that is taking place today. I give you my word we will not engage in parliamentary tactics that would undermine the harmonious operations of this House.

[*English*]

Mr. Hawkes: Madam Speaker, as long as the third party in the Chamber, the New Democrats, are willing to proceed on the same understanding, we would like to see the debate on this very important issue take place over as many hours as possible. I think members are entitled to a lunch hour. If there are to be no dilatory motions or anything of that kind during the lunch hour, I can see no difficulty in sitting through the lunch hour and allowing more members an opportunity to speak on this very important topic.

Ms. Langan: Madam Speaker, we would agree to that with the understanding that members would have 20-minute speeches to be divided as agreed among the speakers.

Mr. Gauthier: I concur in that, too, Madam, Speaker, except that I think it would be appropriate that members who are splitting their time tell the Speaker before they start their speeches in the interest of good understanding and good debate.

Ms. Langan: We would, of course, Madam Speaker, agree to that wholeheartedly.

Mr. Hawkes: Madam Speaker, just in summary, we are deferring the vote until conclusion of government business on Monday, we are sitting through the lunch hour without dilatory motions or parliamentary tactics during that lunch period and members can split their 20 minutes into 10-minute segments provided they notify the Chair.

Supply

I think we are in accord on all of those principles. We are happy to go along with those suggestions.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): The Chair agrees that there is a lot of co-operation and the Chair will try to figure out a way to get lunch.

Mr. Robert D. Nault (Kenora—Rainy River): Madam Speaker, today, although it is not a great pleasure, I have the opportunity to explain to Canadians what is happening in the regions. I do not think I have to stand here today and explain to people from northern Ontario, the Atlantic region or western Canada what is happening in their regions. My intent today is to talk to the people who do not live in the regions, the larger populations of Canada that live in the large urban centres. I want to explain to them what is taking place in regions like northern Ontario and the Atlantic provinces.

My reasons for doing that are simple. Because we are a small population base in the regions in comparison to the urban centres, we are not paid as much attention to as we would like. The reasons for that are very obvious. Mostly it boils down to politics. When you look at the numbers of seats that are involved in rural Canada versus urban Canada, you can understand why, when election time rolls around, when promises are made, urban Canada tends to get the larger piece of the pie.

There is a bit of a problem with that theme and that is that it is not only unfair but it also causes a difficulty as it relates to what we have seen in the last few months and years in relation to national unity. More and more Canadians are coming forward and saying to us: "We will be damned if we are going to sit here and put up with this any longer. We are going to start to speak out. Our members of Parliament do not seem to be doing anything for us, so we will do it for them".

That is why, Madam Speaker, you have seen certain things take place in the last few months that all Canadians can feel ashamed of, but we can also understand why they are happening.

Let us take a look at some of the things that have happened in the last few years. This is by no means the complete list. I will give just a short list to show Canadians the tremendous difficulties we experience in rural Canada, in northern Ontario, northern Quebec, western Canada and the Atlantic provinces. Because of our lack of infrastructure and lack of development we