

breaking point, and yet the bonds of unity still hold. New evidence is emerging every day that lasting Canadian unity will prevail.

In the months ahead we shall see confirmation of those commitments for the constitutional integrity of our country and this government will ensure the constructive conclusion of that process. It is hard to imagine how even the opposition would dare to dally with election talk until Canada's constitutional resolutions are in place.

Those are some of the principles and there are some more by which this government and the people of Canada have conducted their public affairs on behalf of this nation over recent years. It is worth reflecting upon some of the policies, programs and actions which have been taken to fulfil those purposes as contained within those principles.

The programs and the priorities of this government were signalled in the throne speech of 1989 when five specific directions were identified: financial stability, economic growth, environmental integrity, a caring and compassionate society, and the lasting unity of the nation. Those commitments have continued to move steadily forward, all part of a deliberate plan to fulfil the goals and aspirations of Canadians. We still have a long way to go but truly we can take heart and encouragement from the recognition that even in these early stages that plan for the coming century is succeeding.

In terms of public financial stability the government has acted decisively to control its own expenditures and costs. Major long-term moves for economic growth have been made. The free trade agreement has opened the largest market in the world to Canadian entrepreneurs.

Equally in a world context, the environmental imperative cannot be ignored. This government continues to act aggressively and invest wisely to implement the principles of sustainable development. Nothing more dramatically illustrates Canada's environmental commitment than our Green Plan, the first major initiative of this nature by any nation. It is a comprehensive spectrum of projects, programs and measures being systematically introduced and carried out over a six-year period at a total cost of \$3 billion. There are many more initiatives of that nature to contemplate.

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As a caring and compassionate society, Canada has been demonstrated to have few peers. Our social safety net is one of the best in the world and our unemployment insurance program and our medicare system are the envy of even our largest neighbours.

Finally, and more fundamentally challenging and compelling than any other current issue before us, we must preserve and sanctify the political and spiritual unity of our country. No government in Canada's history has ever committed itself so strongly and so completely to that task.

I know I am running out of time and I would like to say that, truly, these final constitutional measures or movements which our country is experiencing at the same time must be the most meaningful developments in the mandate of this government. As significant as all of the other principles and policies and initiatives may be, they pale by comparison to the great challenge of preserving Canada as a strong and unified nation. Frankly our promise and potential for the future hinge on keeping Canada whole.

That remains the primary purpose we must pursue and it is one that we must simply bring to resolution in fulfilment of our responsibilities and our mandate.

That is the goal that I remain confident we will soon achieve and it is in that fashion that we can absolutely best serve Canadians in this and future generations.

On the occasion of the 125th anniversary of Confederation, the reality of one Canada must continue to be a compelling commitment and our proud legacy to the next 125 years of Canadian history yet to come.

Then and only then, with the constitutional resolution firmly in place before us and with the consensus for Canadian unity clearly established beneath us, the prospect of a federal general election will undoubtedly be addressed by the sole leader who can make that decision. When that time comes I predict that the official opposition will not be nearly so anxious for it as it so hungrily appears to be today.

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg—St. James): Mr. Speaker, the unmitigated gall of this government knows no bounds and that is certainly reflected in the remarks made by the previous speaker.