

who will have to live with the decisions taken, and it is they who must resolve these questions. Matters like the establishment of a new territory and the determination of its boundaries are necessarily complex and involve many careful considerations. Some set-backs are inevitable in such a process. Personally, I am very impressed by the way northerners have approached this issue and the progress they have made. The federal Government will continue to support the principle of northern decision-making in this crucial area of concern to the future of the Northwest Territories.

Northern political development is important to all Canadians because it is linked to the key issue of Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic. Hon. Members may recall that in September, 1985, the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) announced a strong package of federal actions aimed at strengthening Canadian sovereignty in our northern regions. These actions included legal adoption of straight borderlines around the perimeter of the Arctic archipelago, creation of an Act dealing with Canadian offshore application, increased surveillance flights by the Canadian Armed Forces, and the construction of a polar Class 8 ice-breaker. The intention to deploy a number of nuclear submarines in northern waters reinforces these steps. But our sovereignty can also be strengthened through the day-to-day activities of Canadians working and living and establishing political institutions in our northern regions. Mr. Nick Sibbeston, the Government Leader of the Northwest Territories, has expressed this idea forcefully as follows:

The recognition of the rights of Canadian aboriginal peoples who have traditionally dwelt in the North, the formation of a strong northern Government and the active development of the North as an integral part of the Canadian economy will affirm the sovereignty of Canada in the Arctic far more completely and effectively than any other measure.

This approach, Mr. Sibbeston said, was very much in the Canadian tradition. Not with loud statements but with quiet action. Not with conflict but with co-operation.

There are many sound reasons for this Government to continue to encourage and facilitate the move to full responsible Government in our northern Territories. Like all Canadians, northerners have the right to participate in making decisions affecting their future. Political devolution will also speed the process of economic development and renewal in the North. It will simplify the regulatory structure in the Territories, create political stability, and encourage economic development. This will help the North and benefit all Canadians.

Finally, political development will help to assert the sovereignty of Canadians over our vast lands north of the 60th parallel.

This Government will continue to work with territorial Governments, native groups and northern citizens to ensure that the orderly political devolution now in progress proceeds to its logical conclusion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Questions or comments? Debate.

### Supply

**Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this debate, particularly because I was not sure I would get the chance. I want to outline why we have chosen to support this Accord and at the same time work to keep open the possibility of improvements. I want to do this for my constituents and those other Canadians who I know continue to have a lot of questions about the so-called Meech Lake Accord. I know the intervention by former Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau raised a lot of questions about the Accord. Certainly, after my own first reading of it I had a lot of questions. I have taken the time to examine the Accord in detail and consult with others, so I want to outline my views.

Up until now there have been some extreme views put forward in the public debate on the Accord. On the one hand, there is the kind of standard government line, the Brian Mulroney hyperbole.

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa—Carleton):** Order!

**Mr. Keeper:** Excuse me. I will not mention the name of the gentleman.

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa—Carleton):** Try Prime Minister.

**Mr. Keeper:** I respect the rules of the House. I was referring to the Right Hon. Member for Manicouagan (Mr. Mulroney).

**Mr. Foster:** What is his name?

**Mr. Keeper:** He is the gentleman who has been Prime Minister for a short period of time and will be for another year or so. After that the people will judge.

He says the deal he and the 10 Premiers cooked up overnight will result in harmony in the Canadian nation. This is an end to the conflict between federal and provincial Governments. From now on everything is going to be sweetness and light. Premier and Prime Minister will walk smiling, hand in hand, arm in arm. That is the kind of vision he presents. It is a Pollyannaish view and belies much of the reality of Canadian politics and the sociology of Canada. We have strong regional interests and a decentralized federation in which the provinces have considerable power and influence. When they feel they have to speak up for their people, they speak up strongly, and you are bound to have real differences between federal and provincial Governments.

Another view is that the Accord is a complete disaster for Canada. Somehow the agreement worked out at Meech Lake and in the Langevin Building is the end of an effective and powerful federal Government. From now on federal Governments will have their hands tied behind their backs. They will be impotent and unable to respond to the needs of ordinary Canadians. They will be unable to bring about the kind of national programs people need. The view is that we have abandoned the vision of one Canada and a common citizenship from sea to sea. The view is that there will be no more national programs. Progress towards a bilingual nation has been