

Private Members' Business

becoming almost extinct, and from the brink of that extinction fighting back, becoming stronger, becoming more proficient.

I often like to view art. The members of the Reform Party do not seem to have much interest in art. If we go to the National Gallery we will see a number of paintings there by Cornelius Krieghoff. Cornelius Krieghoff of course was not a Quebecer, but he painted at the time of New France. In those pictures you will constantly see the Canadian horse. That is very much part of our cultural identity. That is also why it is very important that this nation continue to exist, because we have something very special to protect. A horse clearly cannot run on three legs. The Canadian horse is not just part of Quebec; it is part of all of Canada.

As a previous speaker has mentioned, there is quite a breeding operation not far from the Hill, in North Gower. When I read the background of this horse, that also rang a familiar bell with me, because the last time I went horseback riding was in North Gower.

In conclusion, in looking at the struggles this horse has been through, it is very appropriate that he is called the Canadian horse. More important, it is incumbent upon us in this House to look at those things that make us a nation rather than those things that divide us.

The struggle for Canada in this part of North America has not always been easy and has often been met by trials and tribulations and indeed death. Often our concern in this country was to protect ourselves from the Americans south of the border through wars and now even the consistency of cultural identity in Canada. We continue to resist the imposition of American culture in our society and we continue to strive for the dominance that is Canada's culture. This horse is a symbol of that.

I am very happy to support this bill. I want to remind some of my colleagues in the House that we must always fight for a united Canada.

Mr. Murray Calder (Wellington—Grey—Dufferin—Simcoe, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to have this opportunity to speak on the bill before the House by my colleague from Lanark—Carleton, Bill C-329, an act to recognize the Canadian horse as the national horse of Canada.

The history of this breed is impressive. The Canadian horse was introduced into Canada in 1665, when the King of France sent horses from his own stables to the people in his North American colony. The breed thrived and multiplied in its new home from 145 head in 1679 to over 5,000 in 1720, in that short period of time.

The history of the Canadian horse is also the history of Canada's agricultural pioneers. These animals became an invaluable ally to the settlers in their efforts to survive and prosper in their new homes.

I want to talk about this for a minute, because I found it very interesting. When the member from the third party was here he said we should be talking about more important things in the House right now. We have a motto on my farm back home. The motto is very simply this: mindful of the past, planning for the future. It goes to show members how important our history is to us in this country. If we have no past, we really do not have much to look forward to in the future.

• (1820)

In these days of tractors and modern machinery, when a farmer goes out to plough his field he hops into a 100-plus horsepower tractor that is pulling anywhere from six to ten furrows behind him in an air conditioned cab. He is listening to the radio and the markets as he is doing his job. However, back in the days of the Canadian horse, a farmer went out and had a single furrow in front of him, the horse in front of him, the reins around his neck, two hands on the handles, and he went out ploughing.

Today, with the equipment we have we can plough 15 to 20 acres a day. Back then, a farmer ploughing a field with a horse in front of him could do two acres a day. Members might be interested to know that for every acre he ploughed behind a horse he had to walk 10 miles. For the farmer to do two acres a day he would walk 20 miles. I should be getting more exercise like this.

The horse has always been there. I come from Grey county in Ontario. When the surveys of Grey county were first being done there were two surveys. One was called Rankin and the other was called Trainer. The distance from Owen Sound down to Hamilton is about 150 to 180 miles. When these gentlemen were setting out the surveys to lay out the townships and the roads and everything in the early 1800s, which does not seem all that long ago, the fields were not there. It was all covered with forests. These gentlemen came with backpacks and horses from Owen Sound. They worked their way down and set up food caches all the way through. They came from Hamilton and worked their way up so they could start to do these surveys. The surveys took quite a while.

When the surveys were done, of course, there was still a forest to clean away so we could get into agriculture with open fields. The horse was there again. The farmers were cutting down trees and were using horses to pull those trees and stumps away.

This summer I was up in Collingwood, which is part of my riding. They have a fair called the Great Northern Exhibition. They show horses. It is part of our heritage, our past. I watched and handed out trophies this year for the horse pulls. It is a very competitive atmosphere.

In my own village of Holstein, we have a Santa Claus parade every year. One of the prerequisites to be in that parade is to have a horse-drawn float. There are Mennonites and Old Order Mennonites in my area who use horse-drawn equipment, the horse and buggy, the democrat. Maybe the pages do not know