

*Government Orders*

The people of Canada will have the opportunity to agree with the value of what it is to be a Canadian. This is a great country. There is greatness in this country but there is also a lot of fragility. What can unite us? It is very simple. It is all the virtues that we have developed over the years: tolerance, generosity, respect for others and sharing. When people from outside look at our country they see that it is a country that was, as the Prime Minister said earlier, a small colony of four colonies being united by the Parliament of England in 1867 and becoming one of the great powers of the world.

However, within the confines of this country we have come a long way in understanding, tolerance and acceptance. Some years ago we were having problems between Catholics and Protestants in this country. That does not exist any more because we are all *Christians*.

This reality is very important. What will happen on October 26? The people of Canada from coast to coast and the people of Quebec will say that they want to preserve Canada. This country has to survive. This country has to come back and again be the greatest country in the world. This country has a mission to show to the world that it is possible to be bigger than our parts, to be united in our diversity, and to be strong because of the generosity of spirit that has made this country the best in the world.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

**Mr. Speaker:** It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Malpeque—Small Business; the hon. member for Moncton—National Defence; the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Job Training; the hon. member for Prince Albert—Churchill River—Aboriginal Healing Lodge.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege for me to speak in this debate on the constitutional accord achieved by the first ministers, the Minister Responsible for Constitutional Affairs, the leaders of the territories and aboriginal leaders. I would also like to thank all members, especially the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville and other members in my party who have been involved in the constitutional

I wish to say to my fellow citizens from Quebec that the option advocated by the Parti Québécois and, I suppose, by most of the Bloc Québécois is not the right one.

• (1630)

By turning down this challenge, they will abandon one million francophones outside Quebec, and that would be unthinkable, because as I see it, one million Franco-

phones outside Quebec will endure in Quebec and the rest of Canada. Although they might not be in the best of shape and not too sure of what the future holds, although they may feel left out of the mainstream, they are probably the most precious ally the French fact has in this country. Look at what they have produced in the literary field, our performers and writers Mrs. Roy who came from Winnipeg and Mrs. Maillet from Bouctouche. There are also all the people we have seen so many times on television in Canada. I am thinking of Mr. Bergeron, who was one of the greatest promoters of French on Canadian television and who also comes from Manitoba.

All these people have made a tremendous contribution to the French fact in Canada, and I am sure Québécois do not want to abandon them. People who talk about separation or sovereignty are in fact ignoring the greater challenge of feeling at home in a bigger country, and that country is Canada. It is a country where, as I said earlier, we can be both francophone and Canadian no matter where we live.

[*English*]

Despite the problems I have mentioned, when I balanced the whole package I came to the conclusion that we have to vote yes. We have to tell Canadians that we are turning the page and preparing the country for the 21st century. We have to ask all Canadians to join in the mission of preparing this country for the fantastic challenges which it will face in the 21st century. We also have to stop talking about the Constitution to concentrate our efforts on the other real problems of international competitiveness and the position of trade within the world: how to survive in those situations if we keep talking about constitutions.