

Government Orders

The member who spoke previously talked about a mandate for national unity destroying a respect for creativity. I am sorry that my colleague for Kingston and the Islands is not here to make his usual interjection of "what nonsense", because that is what it is. It is rank and errant nonsense. The creativity that has been fostered by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation across this country, whether one is talking about *Cod Co.* from the province of Newfoundland or cultural programs that relate to our native peoples in the north and in the west or whether—

Mr. Tobin: Codswell.

Ms. Clancy: It is codswallop, just so that the hon. member for Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte will know.

At any rate, the cultural programs which have come from all over this country reflect that "useness", if I may coin the word, that is Canadianism, that is neither English nor French nor any of the multitude of other cultural groups of people this country. It is Canadianism.

When I speak to that, I know that I speak to the hearts of millions of Canadians, from whatever background they have been fortunate enough to spring. I know that that strikes a cord. It must strike a cord in the vast majority of members of this House, because this country in all its works and pomps is perhaps the most precious gift which any group of 26 million people were ever lucky enough to receive.

We stand here in this Chamber, we look at a Crown corporation such as the CBC, and we know that that Crown corporation, that broadcasting network, has made a difference to Canadians all over this country. It creates for Canadians a sense of self and a sense of oneness with our neighbours. The forces that pull us apart, as I said before, are many, varied, and strong, so we must be particularly careful of those forces that pull us together, and the CBC is one of those forces. It is something that Canadians, certainly those of my generation and the generation that is coming behind me, have always taken as a given. I say that of Canadians, of whatever background and of whichever of the two official languages.

I recall, as a graduate student in England with other Canadian graduate students from Quebec, Ontario, the maritimes and the west, staying up all night to listen to Radio Canada International in order to get the news

from home, to listen to hockey games, and to just keep our link with our home country. That is how we discussed it, English and French, of whatever background, our country. It remains our country. CBC is one of the strongest mechanisms that makes it stay our country.

• (1550)

This summer I was fortunate enough to travel to different parts of Canada to speak to friends and family who live all over this vast country. I visited Quebec, western Canada, and the north. I heard the same thing from all these people. What is happening to our country? What has become of the country that we all fought for? What has become of the spirit of tolerance, acceptance and acknowledging each other?

I will tell you one of the things that has become of it, Mr. Speaker. It has become the butt of jokes for people who have no respect for the history and the traditions that began with great explorers who came to this country in the winter with De Monts and Poutrencourt who came to Port Royal.

My friend over there thinks this is funny. He thinks that a spirit of caring for this country is funny. I am glad I amuse him. If I amuse him, that is fine. He should remember that French and English alike have a stake in this country and will hold that stake. It is this country. It is not two countries; it is one country. It is not two nations; it is one country.

I fear for my colleagues in the New Democratic Party as well. The critic for the New Democratic Party, the member for Port Moody—Coquitlam, said in a November 25 article in *The Toronto Star* that he does not share the fears of the member for Mount Royal about the deleted national unity clause. He believes that the CBC contributes to unity simply by existing.

I believe that it contributes to unity simply by existing. I believe, along with the member for Mount Royal, along with the member for Humber—St. Barbe—Baie Verte, and along with every Liberal member in this House, that putting in the mandate for national unity can only strengthen that endeavour. It can only strengthen our belief that this is one country of many peoples, all with an equal share and an equal stake; that we are not going to see the CBC die; that we are not going to see that mandate destroyed; and that we are not going to see this