

Unemployment and the debt are out of control because we have 11 political powers in this country that are constantly bickering and cannot reach any kind of consensus, which means that all this is costing us a lot of money. A sovereign Quebec and a sovereign Canada with a dignified form of association would save us between three and five billion dollars, strictly in operating costs. Imagine how efficient we would be. We might save between 15 and 20 billion dollars. That is how we can stop Canada from going bankrupt.

If you want your beautiful Canada to go bankrupt, make a sovereign Canada with a sovereign Quebec, and an association between the two, and in this way we could have effective administration and together keep Canada from going bankrupt.

Perhaps we should invite the UN and give it some real criteria by which to judge what is good or bad for Canada.

Mr. Larrivée: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member, the sovereigntist from Longueuil.

An hon. member: The sovereign.

Mr. Larrivée: Indeed, the sovereign of Longueuil. I want to thank the hon. member for his comments. He predicts that the future will not be rosy. He is a pessimist. I say everything will be alright, and I know it will be. Granted, as Canadians—all the provinces made the same mistake—we live beyond our means. We took advantage of our natural resources, but now we realize we have to change. We have to roll up our sleeves and adjust to a modern world, and then we will be on the road to prosperity.

When the hon. member says: "We are going to separate from Canada and we are all going to save money", I find that hard to believe. I am not so sure that will happen.

Mr. Parizeau in Quebec City says: "If we separate, we will reduce government spending. It will cost less in administration costs". When public servants in Hull started asking questions about their future—

An hon. member: That's Rocheleau's riding.

Mr. Larrivée: It is in the riding of Hull. Mr. Parizeau told them: "Don't worry, you won't lose your jobs. We are going to keep you all". Someone will have to explain how we can cut spending if we keep spending the same amount of money and maintain the same number of employees and provide the same services. Someone will

have to explain why this is such an ideal solution. Mr. Speaker, we will continue this some other time. I thank you very much.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): *Dura lex, sed lex*, as they used to say.

[English]

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise this evening to join in this debate on the Main Estimates.

I do so in the context of just having come back from the earth summit. It was a very intense experience, where the heads of state of 170 countries were united for three days by a lack of vision, a lack of urgency, and a seeming commitment to put national interests ahead of overwhelming global concerns.

I think they are all deserving of the condemnation of their citizens.

That having been said, in the Main Estimates we are talking about priorities of government. It is very clear coming out of the earth summit in Rio that what is required is a fundamental rethinking about what is important. I have been listening to the debate this afternoon and we are talking about the debt problem and so on, so there are political choices that have to be made.

I would like to inject a little sense of urgency this afternoon. Maurice Strong has a quote that is worthy of repetition: "We can be intellectually pessimistic, but we must be operationally optimistic". That is going to be my theme today. I figure I can be operationally optimistic by exposing some of the very skewed priorities of this government. It seems to be able to find money for the weirdest schemes and yet the money that is used to make a fundamental change that is so urgent in our world seems to be beyond it.

• (1720)

These are political choices made by this government and it is going to be responsible for having made them. I give the House one example. Dr. Nafis Sadik, the head of the UN Population Fund, confronted the representatives from those 170 countries with the need to increase social spending as a means of curbing over-population. Quite frankly, the population of the globe is growing so quickly that we are going to be losing space for future generations. It is not sustainable population growth. What does this government do on population?