

Supply

Mr. Silye: Madam Speaker, if we have a half hour allotted to us and I split my time and my colleague for whatever reason is unattainable, is that time still allowed to me so I can finish off a proper answer and continue comments and questions? Would there be unanimous consent to continue comments and questions until our time is up?

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): If we have unanimous consent the hon. member for Calgary North may use the 14 minutes allotted to him. Do we have unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Returning to debate, the hon. member for Calgary Centre.

Mr. Silye: Madam Speaker, I would like to basically finish the remarks I made earlier to the hon. member of the Bloc Quebecois. What is important about today and what is important about the future of Canada is that we have to get out into the open the essence of what is at stake.

• (1205)

The consequences of separation are uncertain. It is the uncertainty that we must approach. It is the uncertainty that we have to deal with. All the questions I raised in my speech were general questions. The specifics of them and the other side of them will come about if, as and when Quebec decides its future. We will be ready for those. As our leader pointed out, we will have a lot more work done on them and a lot more solutions through the task forces that we are presenting.

On a point of order, Madam Speaker, may I relinquish the remainder of my time to my hon. colleague who is now present to give her 10-minute speech with no comments and questions to allow for the last 10 minutes?

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Do we have unanimous consent to return to the original scheduling of the debate?

Mr. Gagliano: Madam Speaker, I give consent on a condition. The member already used a few minutes so the next member may have the remaining time and not necessarily the 10 minutes.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Do we have unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary North): Madam Speaker, the motion before us today reaffirms the desire of Canadians to remain federally united as one people and asks the House to support them in that desire.

Surely nothing could be a higher priority for those of us who have accepted positions of trust and responsibility in the Parliament of Canada than to preserve and protect the unity and character of the country we have been elected to serve.

Unity is more than an abstract concept, more than some ideal detached from practical realities. There are things that unify people in the structure and operations of a federation. Citizens must realize concrete benefits from their association in the confederation.

In Canada our social support systems have for decades been an important element in making us the envy of the world. Unfortunately our current economic situation has eroded those traditional support systems. In light of this our citizens want to be assured that leaders of the new Canada of the 21st century will act and act decisively to ensure they continue to benefit from affordable and sustainable social services.

A fresh approach to the delivery of social programs is imperative for one simple reason. Our country's financial resources are being increasingly drained away by Canada's huge debt. Over one-quarter of our total spending is paid out in interest every year, a whopping \$41 billion this year alone on the more than \$500 billion which was borrowed by past Conservative and Liberal governments.

Incredibly this present government intends to borrow a further \$100 billion which will diminish our cash resources by an additional \$4 billion to \$6 billion each year in higher interest charges. These are billions of dollars that will be lost when we need to fund health care, pensions and education for Canadian citizens.

For more than two decades those we have elected to manage the affairs of this great nation have seen fit to violate the most basic rule of sound fiscal management, living within one's means.

In order to buy the goodwill of every interest group in society and to fund extravagant and wasteful government, Conservative and Liberal decision makers have placed a mortgage on our country which as of today stands at nearly \$518 billion. That is more than \$18,000 for every man, woman and child in Canada. We owe almost \$1,500 more every single second than we did the second before. In fact, in the time it takes me to complete my remarks in today's debate, our country's debt will have shot up by nearly a million dollars.

This incredible mismanagement and the resulting debt has severely reduced our ability to pay the cost of the social programs that we have enjoyed in the past.

With this evidence before them of instability and unsustainability of current social programs, it is no wonder many Canadians are losing faith in our federal system.

• (1210)

It is no wonder they believe a united Canada offers little long term personal benefit in return for the huge long term liabilities it has amassed.

As services are reduced so is the incentive to stay together as a country. Raising taxes with decreased benefit to the citizens