

The strength and prosperity of Manitoba has been built by people of many different cultures and customs. Bound together by a dedication to hard work, they have built a proud legacy that will endure long into the future.

The past year has also seen celebrations of special accomplishments in the history of Manitoba. These achievements have been a source of pride for not only Manitobans but all Canadians as well.

In this anniversary year, Manitoba serves as a shining example of what can be achieved through the fundamental values of hard work, dedication and commitment to building a strong community.

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CANADIAN UNITY

Mr. Paul DeVillers (Simcoe North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to pay tribute to Roger Bernard who, with the help of his organizer, Mr. Robert Feeney, was able to accumulate over 60,000 signatures in support of Canadian unity.

Mr. Bernard began a 23-day journey on July 1 of this year entitled "Canada Can Campaign '95—Standing Up for Canadian Unity" in order to deliver a message of optimism, hope and inspiration to all Canadians.

[Translation]

Mr. Bernard collected these signatures on a long trip spent running and cycling the 2,219 kilometres between Barrie, Ontario, and his hometown, Eel River Crossing, in New Brunswick. He covered an average of 100 kilometres per day and visited 23 municipalities.

Speaking on behalf of all Canadians, I want to commend Mr. Bernard for his courage and his dedication to our country.

[English]

Mr. Bernard and Mr. Feeney are in the House today.

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[Translation]

REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

Mr. Benoît Serré (Timiskaming—French River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to speak to our neighbours in Quebec who are going through a period that is critical for their future. My riding, Timiskaming—French River, is on the Quebec border, and 30 per cent of the residents are francophones.

Since time immemorial, people in Northern Ontario and Northern Quebec have done business with each other. Strong ties of friendship have developed between these two regions. There is no doubt that if Quebec separates from the rest of Canada, we would see a considerable decline in the level of

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interprovincial trade. Quebec's separation would also have a devastating impact on what now constitutes Canada's strength: our trade, our economy, our national and international relations and especially our two cultures.

Dear friends and neighbours in Quebec, there are no problems we cannot solve in order to build this beautiful country together. So on October 30, decide to grow with Canada and say no to separation.

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FRANCOPHONES OUTSIDE QUEBEC

Mr. Dan McTeague (Ontario, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Bloc Québécois gives us a false impression of its interest in the situation of francophones outside Quebec. Compare the insincerity of its comments on the decline of francophones outside Quebec with the following statement sent by the mayor of Whitby to the mayor of Longueuil, as part of an exchange of letters between the two twin cities. It indicates that francophones outside Quebec have not been assimilated and have contributed to the education of dynamic communities.

As Mayor Edwards said: "I can assure you of the fond admiration and deep attachment felt by all citizens who have taken part in twinning activities since 1969, for our friends and colleagues in the city of Longueuil; I am convinced that the feeling is mutual.

In Whitby, there are tangible and permanent signs of these exchanges which gladden my heart. From my window, for instance, I see Longueuil Park. A little to the north, Charles Garnier school is under construction, a school for French immersion which reminds us of the presence and growth of francophone communities in our country".

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REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last week, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs went so far as to call the sovereignists racists. This insulting epithet is not worthy of a parliamentarian and certainly not of a minister. I have spent my whole life fighting against racism, discrimination and injustice and for the rights of minorities, immigrants and refugees. I am not at all a racist.

Furthermore, I can assure you that sovereignists are tolerant and open to cultural diversity, as are the thousands of voters in the riding of Bourassa, in Montreal North, who voted for me, a candidate of Latin American origin.

The Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs should publicly apologize for these gross and unwarranted attacks which were directed to more than 50 per cent of the people of Quebec.