

Supply

I said this many times before and I will say it again for the benefit of people who still want to dream. Sure, you can have your dreams, but let us be realistic, when the mortgage is sky high. Before, we did not have a mortgage, but now we are mortgaged to the hilt, and the car as well. We still have the same standard of living, but we got it on credit. And now we are right on the brink, we keep on dreaming.

People still think a very strong central government will be able to run everything, but in fact, we need thorough decentralization, with Canada's regions in a broad confederation and a central government with perhaps a few members who will make recommendations. I do not know what the exact parameters will be, but we do need thorough decentralization to ensure that the regions can develop their potential. Because the federal government insists on centralizing everything here in Ottawa, Canada is going straight into bankruptcy. It is as simple as that.

We have to stop dreaming. We have to face the facts. And the facts are that we need a sovereign Quebec and a sovereign Canada. And we will work very well together, as we do now at the economic level, but we will both perform better. That is what we have to offer. We offer a way to better results. So take advantage of that offer.

When we tell you our performance will improve, this is not our opinion, it was the opinion of the experts in Quebec who sat on the Bélanger-Campeau Commission. They concluded, but they did more than conclude, they analysed the issues and interviewed everyone, the business community, the unions, and all socio-economic sectors. They said that to develop its potential, Quebec needed 22 or 23 real powers. That request was turned down. So let us stop dreaming. Let us face the facts. Let us build a strong and prosperous English Canada and a strong and prosperous Quebec, and let us work in unity. We do not want to divide anything. We do not want to hurt anyone. We want to develop our potential, as is our right. Why prevent us from doing so? We want you to develop your potential as we develop ours. Let us stop dreaming and talking about flowers and let us talk a little about dollars and cents and prospects for the future.

[English]

Mr. Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury): Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the question.

My immediate reaction to the proposition that somehow the country would be better if the member has his way prompts me to think of the province I come from, New Brunswick, and the 250,000 Acadians who probably would challenge that proposition.

I would also defer to the judgment of the United Nations as to whether Canada is living the dream. I would also defer to the many hundreds of thousands of people who would dearly love the opportunity to live in the country as it is.

As for the question having to do with the deficit, I can only acknowledge the need to deal responsibly with our finances, which I believe we are. I would also challenge members who constantly stand up and speak to this question to think about the programs that are financed and have been financed. As an Atlantic Canadian I know there are those in the Reform Party who are not as sensitive to the nature of the country relative to the spirit of generosity I referred to. I cannot imagine that in any way the country could be better off being more divided.

• (1350)

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River): Madam Speaker, I would like to say how pleased I am for the opportunity to speak in the debate today.

In reference to the hon. member's remarks preceding mine, speaking of the spirit of generosity let us not forget where the bulk of that money from taxpayers is coming from. Much of it comes from western Canadians in a spirit of generosity to the rest of Canada. Let us be absolutely clear about that.

I will mention again how pleased I am to speak in this debate today. I will be addressing the phrase in our motion which talks about further democratizing our institutions and decision making processes. As we spend month after month in this place we are all well aware of the situation we are all in and dear knows we do need to have some democratic reform in our institutions and in our decision making processes here.

It is also very clear that many people outside of this Chamber but outside and inside Quebec as well are demanding some things as they demanded of us in the last election. These are I believe from people inside and outside Quebec. It is every bit as important to them. Inside Quebec and out they are seeking dynamic and constructive change in their political institutions. They are asking for governments that listen to them, consult with them and are accountable to them. Canadians and Quebecers want to improve the quality of representative government in the country.

We know these things well. Madam Speaker, you and I were here in the last Parliament. We know through the national debate surrounding Meech Lake, the Charlottetown accord and more recently through our door knocking at the federal election last fall, through town hall meetings and other communication with our constituents, that there was almost a cry from people saying something needs to be done to democratize the institutions and Parliament itself.

This desire for reform of our political institutions is something that all of us in this 35th Parliament can do something about. Many of my colleagues and I have offered a number of proposals that would lead to democratic reform in the House.