

*Government Orders*

• (1545)

Unity is bound by how we treat each other. On this score, Canadians and the very essence of Canada as I define it have always valued generosity, inclusion and a sense of compassion for one another. That is one of the reasons our country has been able to prosper over the years. This is not the time to abandon those values because those same values are needed the most at this time.

[Translation]

We must make these values part of our daily lives, perhaps even celebrate them in special events such as National Citizenship Week and Flag Day. This coming year, the two events will be combined into a week of celebrations around the theme *Canada: take it to heart*.

We have recently begun to note in Canadians throughout the country a growing desire to show their great love of Canada and their concern for the state of the nation in some concrete way.

[English]

It was with this in mind that the Canada take it to heart initiative was developed by the citizenship and immigration department working with the Canadian heritage department. Together we created a special week of activities where Canadians can come together to celebrate their commitments as fellow citizens and their pride in being Canadian and the remarkable heritage and future we all share.

This is just one very modest way of expressing that sense of Canadian community. For that concept of community to survive and indeed thrive, it will need the help and co-operation of the entire Canadian family, of all Canadians in all regions of all ages and of all backgrounds. We should never forget that it is only through the participation of Canadians and the inclusion of all of her people that we can make Canada grow, thrive and flower.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pierre de Savoye (Portneuf, BQ):** Madam Speaker, Bill C-110 is a big mistake. It not only fails to respond to Quebec's expectations but even makes future constitutional amendments impossible, for all practical purposes. When everyone has a veto, the obvious and inevitable conclusion is that on any given proposal for a constitutional amendment, there will always be one holder of a veto who will use it to block such proposals.

Although the Prime Minister hinted to the House that recognition of the distinct society concept would eventually be included in the Constitution, the veto powers he is now distributing left and right will make it impossible to make any further amendments to the Constitution. It would be a joke, if it were not so

tragic. However, this is symptomatic of a far more fundamental problem.

• (1550)

When provinces and First Nations insist on each having a veto on any constitutional amendment, this can mean either that all parties are so pleased with the Constitution as it stands that they want to give each other assurances they will never change it, or they are showing a considerable distrust of the federal system. I am afraid the answer is obvious.

The present Constitution of Canada does not fit the economic, social and cultural realities of Canada today. The profound constitutional malaise in our societies today has many consequences for our daily lives, because of the combined impact of the federal government's legislative and spending powers.

That is why we are now saddled with an incredible deficit, why employment policies always were and still are formulated from the top down without any real regard for the provinces and why the spectre of national standards irrelevant to regional situations can only mean institutionalized chaos.

In this respect, the Québec government's desire to establish a new partnership with the rest of Canada was and still is a unique way to start the 21st century with a process that would make for a new relationship and a new solidarity between the populations residing in the Canadian economic space. Unfortunately, traditionally federalist forces have stubbornly distorted Quebec's blueprint and made it out to be the opposite of what it really is.

[English]

Even the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration a few moments ago could not resist doing exactly that. The minister and this government must realize that when a majority of Quebecois voted no in the last referendum, it was in the hope that the Prime Minister would deliver on his promises.

The bill now before the House is not what was expected and is not what is needed. Therefore, no one should be surprised if in due time those who voted no shall want to reconsider through another democratic referendum.

In view of this, it is most unfortunate that the Reform Party proposes using legal force to oppose the legitimate will of the people of Quebec to reconsider democratically their future. Furthermore, it is also most unfortunate that the Reform Party has stated that should the people of Quebec decide in favour of sovereignty, it would be denied this outcome using armed forces. Even the Prime Minister let it be known that he would object to the unfolding of this democratic process. This is intolerance and it is unacceptable in any democratic country.