

*Government Orders**[Translation]*

Never again should our Constitution be seen as an obstacle to achieving our great destiny—not in Quebec or in any other region.

Our fundamental document must accurately express who we are and, above all, clearly affirm what we aspire to become. That is the challenge we face.

Let us not be afraid to change our Constitution, but let us have the highest respect for what it should affirm and protect—the land of our ancestors and country of our children.

Together with all those who have placed their trust in us, I propose today that we find ways to meet the demands of a world undergoing swift and deep change.

With respect for what others have sincerely wanted our Constitution to be, but with an awareness of its imperfections and a determination to make it an instrument of unity rather than a source of discord, let us give Canada the possibility of amending its Constitution, in a manner consistent with our history and the needs for our future.

How, Mr. Speaker? All around us we can see in what direction other countries are moving. Look at Europe—at England and France—the mother countries of many of us.

A new, politically integrated and economically united Europe as Chancellor Kohl said recently and I repeat, a Europe where political integration and economic union will be complete. Those were the words Chancellor Kohl used.

• (1140)

But this new Europe is already in the making: in 1992, 340 million Europeans will form a common market; in 1994, Europe will have one central bank; and by 1999, they plan to have a common currency.

Mr. Speaker, Europe is irreversibly headed towards a new form of federalism. We must ask ourselves why this is so. The driving force behind this extraordinary movement in Europe is the French Republic. President Mitterrand himself is one of the great architects of European union and economic and political integration. The President of the French Republic has become the great architect of this political and economic integration. Why? Because the French, the British, the Spaniards, the Italians, the Germans—Europeans in general—consider it the political system most capable of ensuring

respect for linguistic and cultural diversity, economic development and social justice.

The road Europeans are about to take is one that Canadians have already travelled: we have had a common market since 1867; we have a common currency since 1870; and we have a central bank since 1934. Why would we swim against the tide of history by abandoning our federal system while Europeans are discovering what we already enjoy?

About 10 days ago on television, we saw a dramatic illustration of this yearning for closer links when French miners shook hands with English miners, 500 metres under the English Channel. England is now joined to France. That is not merely a symbol. It is the most concrete and conclusive proof that the future belongs to those who unite.

In this House, I represent an electoral district in Quebec. To justify their desire to undo the country, some people in Quebec propose an eventual association with Canada, without any guarantee at all. To them I say: We already have an association, and we will make it even more productive and flexible than it is now, for the benefit of all Quebecers and Canadians—for the benefit of this great country of ours.

*[English]*

Let us all build and not bulldoze. Let's renovate and not raze. It is obvious that our constitutional amending process has not worked to our advantage. Everybody knows that. But we all know something else, something that wells up from our history and that we share as citizens of this magnificent country.

Both the idea of Canada and the ideal of Canada are precious, are of enormous value, and continue to live in the minds and hearts of all Canadians.

The spirit of Canada was not developed as a result of the bringing about of some constitutional document. Canada was not secured by a series of documents pasted together in London or Paris, or anywhere else. Canada already lived in the hearts of aboriginal parents who conveyed to their children an appreciation of the beauty of their natural environment thousands of years ago.

Canada was a dream shimmering on the ocean's horizon when Cartier and Champlain brought the