

The Constitution

I can only say that this experience, the experience of being part of our constitutional renewal, has been in so many ways the highlight of my so far short public career. I want to try to express to you, Sir, to my party, to the House and, most important, to the people who sent me here, my intense feeling of gratitude for the privilege of being here at this historic time.

This promises to be an emotional debate. Earlier speakers members at various times showed through their tears the emotion they felt. I do not expect to have that effect on members, but I can say this, that however one views this resolution, whatever one's political bias, there can be no doubt that the importance of this date for Canada is felt on all sides of the House.

The writing of constitutions must be among the most noble and important work in which people's elected representatives engage. I am here in some measure because the previous member for Don Valley West, Mr. Jim Gillies chose not to run. Perhaps with your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, I might read into the record his favourite quote. He used it always to advise his constituents, now my constituents, on matters of importance. It seems this quote has merit in our discussions today. The quote will be familiar to many people here. It goes like this:

Make no little plans: They have no magic to stir men's blood—make big plans, aim high in hope and work.

The philosophy behind those words continues something along the line of: "Aim high in your hopes and dreams remembering that our grandchildren will probably do things that we never dreamed of. Let your watchword be justice and your beacon be hope."

Let us be clear and sure that the spirit in which we approach this debate is exactly that: hope for justice for all Canadians, including women, men, our native people and all Canadians, especially the people of Quebec.

Let us also be clear that this debate must not delay dealing with the other urgent problems this country faces, and our unreasonable delay would serve no one.

There are several matters I want to raise in this debate. We are, however, approaching four o'clock and I would like to make sure that I put something on the record before I proceed to deal with what I think are absolutely vital questions in this debate, specifically the issues of equality of men and women, the issue of the protection of the treaty rights of our aboriginal people, and the amendments which my leader proposed earlier today.

We received a telex in which I believe the House will be interested because quite a bit of admirable discussion has taken place about attempting to persuade premiers to come on side with native rights and men's and women's rights. This telex came from the Premier of Ontario, the Hon. William G. Davis. It was addressed to the Right Hon. Joe Clark and to Duke Redbird, president, Ontario Métis and Non-Status Indian Association, Native Council of Canada offices. To those who want to know where Ontario stands, I can say it stands foursquare behind the entrenchment of the rights of the

aboriginal peoples and for Section 28 unamended. I will quote for the record from the telex. It reads, in part:

Ontario remains committed to the accord signed on November 5. However, to the extent there is significant opportunity prior to the end of the debate in Ottawa to influence those who do not support the current provisions for women's rights and the inclusion of aboriginal rights, we will be endeavouring to do so.

It continues:

We do express our sincere regret that aboriginal rights were excluded from that agreement. . . .

It concludes:

We remain committed to the principle of entrenching rights for both women and native peoples.

Let there be no mistake about where Ontario stands.

I propose to continue that argument when I am next allowed to rise, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It being four o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely public bills, notices of motions and private bills.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

[English]

Public Bills Nos. 1 to 59 inclusive allowed to stand by unanimous consent.

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● (1600)

CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD ACT

AMENDMENT RESPECTING PRODUCTION OF FUEL ALCOHOL

Mr. Stan Schellenberger (Wetaskiwin) moved:

That Bill C-259, to amend the Canadian Wheat Board Act (renewable energy), be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works.

He said: Mr. Speaker, private members' hour is getting the attention it always gets in the House, but I do recognize that many members are very busy.

I bring this bill forward today as one of a series I want to present to the House which deal with renewable energy. This is a subject in respect of which we would require very minor amendments to a number of acts in order to allow us to proceed toward energy self-sufficiency in this nation more quickly than is presently the case. I have considered a number of acts and I have presented simple amendments by way of private member's bills which I think would greatly assist us in moving toward the use of more renewable energy fuels in our nation.

This bill has to do with the Canadian Wheat Board Act. Its purpose is to extend the objects and powers of the Canadian