

consensus and building a constitution. They want people to be democratically involved. We can do that through a constituent assembly, where people who are now under-represented in Parliament have a chance to be represented at the table, in particular the aboriginal people of Canada.

Travelling the country you would find, after you get over some of the deep-seated animosity between so many peoples in this country, a real understanding that one of the real jewels of Canada is the diversity that we have, the fact that Quebec is so unique and different, with a different language, a different history and culture, and a different legal system. We have a great tolerance toward minorities and ethnocultural groups from all parts of the world. We are the second largest country in the world, after the Soviet Union, in terms of area, and that tremendous size and the mountains and the differences in this country should be seen as things that we cherish and build on, and not divide us.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, my friend, the member for Chambly, and I, we spent two or three days just before Christmas in New Brunswick, in British Columbia and also in Edmonton and when we spoke to students, we noticed that there was not a very big difference in the various parts of the country: All people want a clean environment, a job for their children and peace in the world, whether they speak French or English or live in western or eastern Canada.

[*English*]

What we need in this country is an open democratic process. I see my time has expired and you are about to rise. We need an open democratic process that allows people to participate.

**Mr. Alex Kindy (Calgary Northeast):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the speech of the hon. member. He addressed the question of Canadian unity. He did not mention the question of referenda. I would like to know if he is in favour of referenda, whether he wants people's input, or just the constituent assembly.

Another point I would like to comment on is that Canadians right now have tremendous economic difficulties because of the policies of the government, of high interest rates, and so on and so forth—the goods and services tax in particular.

Travelling this country, everybody tells you the economy is slow and things are not progressing. They blame

the goods and services tax and they blame the high interest rates that have caused a made-in-Canada recession.

What we should be addressing is the question of economic recovery. One of the points the Governor General mentioned in his Speech from the Throne was free trade with Mexico. I would like to know whether the hon. member's party is also in favour, at this time, of an association with Mexico, of free trade with that country. I do not believe that this is the opportune time. We have not established a working relationship with the provinces, we have not established free trade with the United States that is to the benefit of Canada. I would like him to comment.

**Mr. Nystrom:** Mr. Speaker, the most important issue in this country today is the economy—all the economic problems, the unemployment, the high interest rates, the devastation in the farm economy, particularly in western Canada. That is the number one issue. People want us to solve the unity problem within the next year or so. Then we can deal with the real problems, which are jobs and creating wealth for the people of this country.

I am convinced, after travelling this country time and time again, we do not need the GST in this country. We should get rid of the GST. The free trade deal with the United States has sold out too much of our sovereignty. We have given away much too much for what we receive. We should not now be entering into yet another free trade deal with Mexico that once again will hurt this country by sending more and more jobs south of the border into Mexico where wages are very, very low and working conditions are very, very poor.

These are real issues that have to be addressed, and addressed very quickly. This is why we have to resolve this unity question, so we can get on to the real issue of building a strong and prosperous Canada with jobs reaching every person.

Second, on referenda, I think the member from Calgary may have been out. In my speech I spent two or three minutes on referenda. I suggested that we have to look at the wisdom of whether or not we should have national referenda. If we do have a referendum, we should look at all kinds of questions that are real problems for me. It could be a divisive tool. What is a majority in a referendum? Is it just strictly a national majority or do we need a majority in each of the four regions of the country? Do we put minority rights to a