

Brunswick are tipping again. That cannot take away from the fact that has been drawn to our attention by the honourable Senator Simard, that an exceptional record has been established in our province and is deserving of attention.

Hon. Jean-Maurice Simard: Honourable senators—

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Honourable senators, if the Honourable Senator Simard speaks now, his speech will have the effect of closing the debate.

[Translation]

Senator Simard: Honourable senators, I shall try to be brief. First of all, I would like to express in this chamber my appreciation for the legendary courtesy and great generosity of Senator McElman.

We had an example of this yesterday. When Senator McElman realized I was absent, he remarked that the debate should not be closed until I was present, according to the custom of this chamber. I therefore wish to thank him. Senator McElman has shown once again that even in the heat of political action, there are still people, and he is certainly one of them, who are determined to be fair, come what may, who take the enlightened view and who remain in touch with reality. Once again, Senator McElman, I want to thank you.

I am told that the senator was a redoubtable adversary of my predecessors in my party. Your comments yesterday have given us another chance to express our admiration. Yours is an example worth following by each and every one of us who in the heat of battle may make statements that we are inclined to regret later on.

Honourable senators, my former federal MP and new colleague and desk mate also made a number of remarks on which I shall not comment any further. The purpose of my inquiry was to emphasize the exceptional contribution made by Premier Hatfield.

From what I have heard, his candidate's defeat in my former riding is not going to change my assessment of his record. In any event, it is far too early to make post mortems and write a new chapter in our history. It will take several years to establish the historical impact of the achievements of Premier Hatfield and his government.

Meanwhile, I would rather give a very quick overview of Premier Hatfield's major contribution, which consisted of creating a provincial party that is more open and accessible to both communities. In that sense, our party has caught up with the Liberal Party which had been recognized in New Brunswick as the party appealing the most to Francophones while enjoying the often repeated confidence of Anglophones. Together we have achieved that, and it is my wish that three months, six months or two years from now, our next provincial leader will agree to air his convictions and will not let himself be fooled, that he will not accept as politically viable for a matter of months such right-wing or reactionary positions.

I have always contended that I would rather lose with dignity and forthrightness than win on the basis of excessive slogans or positions that are acceptable in the short-term but

that will not serve the interests of New Brunswick in the long run.

Coincidentally we are concluding that inquiry today almost at the very moment a conference is held in New Brunswick to announce the Canadian government's decision to join the Hatfield government's initiative. A trust fund is being established for the financing of a provincial newspaper over decades or for as long as the company which undertook to publish the newspaper will need that fund or as long the company will want to publish.

With all due modesty I want to take credit for and express my pride in certain measures which Premier Hatfield and Senator Robertson and also some other honourable senators and I have been associated with. I think that the establishment of that trust fund which provides a tool, not for propaganda but for communication and solidarity, will enable people from the three French-speaking areas of New Brunswick, if not people from all over the province, to come to know themselves better, to better exchange and better espouse common views where the need exists in the best interests of the community.

I am pleased to note that after three years—I know about that because I have led, at least informally, the negotiations with Mr. Trudeau's previous government and the present government since September 1984—Mr. Mulroney's government has agreed to join the project. To my mind, this will be a guarantee, an insurance policy against any attack on the Acadian community by the English-speaking press or other interests or pressure groups. There will be a newspaper secure from any political intervention, a newspaper that will have a stable financial basis. This will help it resist any form of blackmail or pressure. I very modestly submit that this will be a monument to solidarity and a marvelous fighting tool.

For the record, I would like to quote almost in its entirety the statement made today in Moncton by the Honourable Minister Benoît Bouchard concerning the Canadian government's decision.

The Hon. the Acting Speaker: Is it agreed, honourable senators?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Senator Simard: Minister Benoît Bouchard said as follows:

I am happy to announce that the Government of Canada, through the Department of the Secretary of State, has decided to make a contribution of \$2 million towards the founding of a French language daily newspaper in New Brunswick. This sum is to be paid into a trust fund established for this purpose.

One-third of the population of New Brunswick is French-speaking. This is the second largest French-speaking community in Canada, and its presence and vitality are well known. It needs a daily newspaper to express its views and needs and to reflect its presence in the community. Despite laudable efforts by l'Acadie Nouvelle, various weeklies and the French network of the CBC, the closing of L'Évangeline in September 1982 has left a gap that must be closed without delay. A newspaper is still a