

### Supply

people was outlawed. Those Haidas who practised potlatch during that period did so at the risk of imprisonment.

I have attended potlatches, as I am sure have other Hon. Members. The Parliament of the Haida people, as is the case in respect of other B.C. Indian Nations, functions in much the same way as this Parliament functions. In addition to dealing with marriage and death ceremonies, the potlatch, or Parliament, deals with the transmission of lands, the passage of new laws, the transfer of property and territorial rights, and so forth. These are all matters that are dealt with, by tradition, by the potlatch. The potlatch is in fact a sitting Parliament.

What happened to the Haida people of South Moresby in terms of the enormous decline of their population through the introduction of diseases inherent to our civilization is little understood. There were two major disease types involved, and a vaccine was available in Victoria for both. However, that vaccine was not made available to the Haida people on the coast.

In addition to bringing about an enormous decline in the population of the Haida people, we then made it illegal for their Parliament to sit.

It is only in recent times that the aspirations of the aboriginal peoples of B.C. are really coming to the fore. Their Parliaments are back in full activity; their traditional laws are fully functioning.

This proposal recognizes the title of the aboriginal people of that area, the Haida people, giving them the right to practise self-government in that area, while at the same time allowing British Columbians, Canadians, and citizens of planet Earth the opportunity to have that area preserved as a beautiful oasis of timelessness, a place where one can see water drops falling from trees a thousand years old.

That we can deal with it in this way is remarkable.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Member for Mission—Port Moody (Mr. St. Germain).

**Mr. St. Germain:** Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the Hon. Member can become quite emotional in speaking of South Moresby. It is, after all, an area within his riding. However, I want to ensure that the Canadian public understands that it is this Government, the Progressive Conservative Government, that has taken the necessary initiatives to achieve this end. In doing so, all we ask is that common sense prevail for all groups involved.

That is the only comment I wish to make, in closing.

**Mr. Fulton:** Mr. Speaker, it has never been my intention to make this a partisan issue. I do not intend to quote what has been said by some Members of this House in earlier times. I think we have gone beyond that.

I thank the Government, led by the Prime Minister, for having taken such an active interest in this proposal. The

Prime Minister played a most useful role in getting a commitment from the Premier of British Columbia to resolve the matter. It is a commitment that found its way into the Speech from the Throne in the British Columbia Legislature. Just this week, both the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister telephoned the Premier of British Columbia and once again got a commitment from him that the issue would be resolved; and with this whole House speaking as one voice, there is no doubt in my mind that it will be resolved.

I am being very serious in saying that we have to be non-partisan in respect of this issue. This is not an initiative that is taken by any one Party; rather, it is an initiative that is fundamental to planet Earth, an initiative that is fundamental to the South Moresby area, and an initiative that is fundamental to the constitutional and historic rights of the original inhabitants of the area involved.

It is an area that must be preserved, and I thank the Hon. Member for his continued support toward that end.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Member for Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe (Mr. Tobin) on debate.

**Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in the debate today on the motion moved by the Hon. Member for Skeena (Mr. Fulton).

At the outset, let me say that the Hon. Member for Skeena is a gentleman who is noted for bringing a great deal of passion to this place in dealing with various issues. Some days I find myself in accord with the Hon. Member; and other days, I find myself in passionate disagreement.

I would be less than honest if I did not say that during the course of the Hon. Member's remarks today, as one who comes from Newfoundland, the other side of the country, but also as one who has a deep appreciation of the unspoiled environment in this country, I found myself carried away by his words, carried away by the passion, carried away by the commitment that he articulated in putting forward the proposition that that area known as South Moresby, all of the island south of the line known as South Moresby, ought to be protected and set aside as a national park reserve.

• (1200)

I congratulate the Hon. Member for Skeena for giving the House an opportunity to debate this motion today. I am sure, as the Hon. Member for Skeena has said, that today the House is dealing very much with a non-partisan issue. This is not an issue to be dealt with by parliamentarians in a manner that reflects the partisan differences of individual Members or of individual political Parties. I believe this motion deserves a conclusion to the process, that is, a unanimous endorsement from all Members of Parliament present from all three political Parties.

It is my privilege today to speak on behalf of my Leader, the Right Hon. Member for Vancouver Quadra (Mr. Turner), on this issue since he could not be in the House today. In fact, he