

*S. O. 31*

I am glad my friend raised the issue of referenda because it is something that all members of this House should understand today. In May 1990 a national referendum was held on the issue of Gwaii Haanas among the Haida nation. This was a difficult and divisive vote, one that pitted elders and ancient family traditions one against the other in relation to the designation of this area. It was an emotional and deeply rooted spiritual battle as deeply wounding and as deeply painful as the one presently going on in this country.

Referenda, for all of the good that can come from them, also carry inherent dangers because of the nature of the wording of a question on a very difficult issue. It is a challenge not easily met in the present legislation because it could pit one region against another, one province against another, one part of the country against another, and there is unlimited funding. There are major questions about the referendum process that I do not think have been seriously addressed by this House in the vault and pressure of time allocation and strangulation which the government has chosen on the referenda legislation.

On the issue of property that is designated as parks, national or provincial, I often remind myself when I look in my children's faces, and I encourage you to do the same, that property and lands belong to no one. Time will always pass it on to another generation.

Our greatest challenge in this country at this time is to remember that Quebec will never move anywhere. The geography, the land, the trees, the people, all of that will always remain there. That is why I was proud to be a member of the New Democratic Party when we voted as a party for the right of self-determination for Quebec.

I am proud of that. If the people of Quebec choose that road I will always be proud to be in Quebec, to be in this country, to be on this land and to be on this planet.

In terms of land for parks, as to whether it ever reverts to Ottawa or British Columbia, we will be hearing about our greatest single challenge if we listen to what is going on during this lead up to the earth summit, which is a few weeks from now.

People like Dr. Caldicott are telling us that we are into the last of a decade. Dr. Caldicott predicts that if we do not change what we are doing within the next eight years

the major biological systems of this planet will collapse. The atmosphere will collapse, and the oceans of the world will collapse in terms of their productivity.

Our greatest challenge in this Chamber should be to find ways to protect 12 per cent of Canada, to find ways to get out of the fossil energy trap. The fossil energy consumption of this planet is the great trap. If you burn a gallon of gasoline it weighs eight pounds, then after it is burned you have 20 pounds of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

When you drive in a car you must think that it takes a large tree a whole year to take back out of the atmosphere the gallon of gasoline you burned as you drove 30 miles. We move blindly onward with all the crazy debates we have in this House about referenda, about what is happening with the Westray mine, and all these other things.

They are certainly important, but this Chamber so rarely pays attention to the great things we can do. One great, tiny thing we can do is viewed by every Canadian. Remember that several hundred thousand Quebecers wrote to this Chamber about South Moresby, about Gwaii Haanas to plead with this Chamber to set it aside. Three million letters came in. Some of the strongest support in Canada came from Quebec. I urge that this bill be passed.

• (1100)

[*Translation*]

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** It being eleven o'clock, we will now proceed to Statements by Members, pursuant to Standing Order 31. The hon. member for Bruce—Grey.

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## STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*English*]

### SKOPJE

**Mr. Gus Mitges (Bruce—Grey):** Madam Speaker, the Skopje republic, formerly part of Yugoslavia, cannot count on recognition unless it abandons the name of Macedonia to which it has no ethnic, cultural or historical birthright.