

*Government Orders*

is said and done it is my hope and desire that members of the Bloc will be living with it because we will continue to be Canadians one and all together. That is my greatest hope.

I also thank the hon. member for Yukon for participating in the debate. She brought another perspective to the issue. We sit through these prepared speeches and we listen to what each other has to say about various issues. However when someone can inject a little emotion into the debate it tends to make the debate much more interesting. The member injected some emotion into the debate. She called into question the motivation of specific members of my party as individuals and the party as a whole. I think she cast unfair aspersions on what our role or our function is in Parliament.

I would ask if there is anyone in the whole country, including members of the Bloc, who could think for even one second that what we as Canadians have done to our native brothers and sisters is something we should be proud of. I am wondering if anybody here thinks it is something worthy of repeating.

When a party comes into the House and questions the wisdom of legislation brought forward by the government, first that is its job. Second, maybe there is something to be learned from it.

The fact of the matter is that as an individual I did not become sensitized to the situation of Indians in our country yesterday or when I was elected. I live in western Canada. I was brought up and lived among Indians and with Indians going to school with me who lived in residential schools. We played together. We had fun together. We have relations together through marriage and adoption. We are in a much closer relationship with Indians in western Canada than exists in other parts of the country. It is very much part and parcel of our daily lives in many instances. It is absurd to suggest that somehow it is anti-Indian or racist because our views do not match government legislation or the views of an interest group or someone who is going to benefit and we question it. It is our function. It is our job. It is our duty to question legislation. It is what all of us are supposed to be doing.

• (1750)

If we did that more often, members on the government side and members on the opposition side, and not just automatically salute the flag because it is on the pole, maybe we would not be in the miserable condition we are as a country with debt that we cannot possibly pay in our generation. Our generation and the generation before us got us into this mess.

If we are bankrupt as a nation for our boneheaded decisions, does it matter whether we are bankrupt Indians or bankrupt non-Indians? Does it matter if we are bankrupt immigrants? If our country does not have the funds to pay our commitments, does it matter where we came from? It does not. We have to start

thinking in terms of our responsibilities to future generations, not to the next election.

As I mentioned earlier, I received a letter from a constituent the other day which said that the difference between a statesman and a politician is that a politician looks to the next election and a statesman to the next generation. Maybe we should be spending more time thinking about the next generation, less time about the next election, and a whole lot less time trying to make political points or political hay out of misrepresentation just so we can win another election. It is demeaning and it is below the dignity of the House.

Another question in the debate is our relationship with Indians in Canada. We have to go from this father knows best Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development making all the decisions and put the responsibility for decision making with the people affected by it. There is nothing, at least in my opinion, that will do more to create self-sufficiency and self-respect, the cornerstone of advancement, than responsibility.

We cannot give people vast or even small sums of money and say: "There is more where this comes from. Don't worry about being responsible about spending it and looking after it. It is a bottomless pit". We have to give with the opportunity to generate wealth and income the responsibility for doing it. If we are not prepared to do that we are not going to achieve anything.

Before we start doing all this, let us start figuring out a way to dismantle the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and pass off the responsibility to the people to whom it should be given, that is the Indians themselves. The cornerstone upon which success will be built is self-respect and pride.

I would like to spend a couple of minutes talking about another situation, the whole notion of two row wampum. Last winter a group of Indians were demonstrating in front of the West Block and around Parliament Hill. Last winter in Ottawa was brutally cold. After about three days of these people standing around trying to get attention I looked at them and thought they really had to care about what they are doing to stand around in the cold and not hire somebody to do it for them.

I talked with them for a while and got to know a couple of the people involved. One fellow in particular, Stuart Myiow, was from Akwasasne. He is the publisher of a small newspaper, *The Eagle's Cry*. He wanted to get the attention of parliamentarians because he said we had broken the two row wampum, which means equal but separate. It means that they cannot have their feet in two different canoes at the same time: when Indians take on the mantle of the white man they are no longer Indians. How can they be both? According to him it brings out a whole host of social problems, identity problems, and problems in how they are going to go forward into the future.