

ties cannot be understated. The diversity of our country enriches us all.

While we celebrate that diversity, we also need to recognize that we share a great deal. We have common problems, hopes, and aspirations and we must come together to meet the common challenges ahead.

The issue confronting us is not who loves Canada or who loves Canada more. It is about what kind of Canada we want to create. It is about creating a Canada of equality, harmony, and social and economic justice. Writing a constitution that reflects our values and corrects our historical injustices is a crucial element in the creation of that kind of Canada. It is, however, but one element and I say to the House today that, while we apply ourselves to this task of constitutional reform, we must work diligently with this committee to see if we can break this impasse. With the political will, I am optimistic that we can do that. With leadership by the government and by all parties, we can break this impasse.

We must not at the same time lose sight of other issues. We must put an end to poverty in Canada, put an end to food banks and soup kitchens. We must continue to work for real economic justice, jobs for all Canadians and fair taxation, to put an end to the violence against women, and for international development and peace. Finally, we must join together to ensure that the world we leave our children is a clean world and an environmentally sound world.

In my support of the Prime Minister's motion, I say to the House, let us write a constitution which reflects what Canada is all about. Let us move on to create a united Canada, a caring and compassionate Canada, a Canada for all Canadians.

**Mr. Hawkes:** Mr. Speaker, I am sorry I have not had a chance to talk with my colleague across the way. It has been a pattern in many of our debates, including opposition days and many others recently, that when we come to the 20-minute speeches parties or individuals, if they would like, could indeed split their speech between two members for 10 minutes each, with a similar arrangement for the question and comment period which follows.

### *Government Orders*

I wondered if there might be a disposition in the House to follow that pattern. Therefore, each party, depending on their speaker, would be free to go the full 20 minutes or to split it between two people. If, indeed, there is that predisposition then our first two speakers would do the splitting.

**Mr. Gauthier:** Mr. Speaker, we would certainly concur with that suggestion since we started that some years ago. I would like to make sure that members splitting their times into two 10-minute speeches followed by five-minute questions would give notice when they start their speeches so that the Chair and everyone in the House knows that indeed we are dealing with a member who is splitting his time.

**Mr. Speaker:** Agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans):** Mr. Speaker, of course, as—

**Mr. Speaker:** In response to the comment made by the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier, could the Minister tell us whether he intends to speak for 10 or 20 minutes?

**Mr. Valcourt:** It is an interesting topic that could be discussed for hours, but I will only take 10 minutes, Mr. Speaker.

Of course, as Member for Madawaska—Victoria, in New Brunswick, as a member of the Acadian community in that province, as a francophone committed to promoting the growth and development of official language communities in this country and as a private citizen who favours a Constitution maintaining a balance between the need for a strong national government and the full participation of federal partners in national affairs, I am pleased today to support the motion before the House creating a special committee to return to the public domain the discussion generated by the initiative taken last week by New Brunswick's Premier, Mr. McKenna.

Mr. Speaker, I listened earlier when the Prime Minister referred to the current concern of so many Canadians now, including many young Canadian men and women. I was in the "Republic of Madawaska" yesterday, in Edmundston, Brayons country, and a 14-year-old girl told me about an assignment they had in their school on the issue of bilingualism, and she showed me her