

*Routine Proceedings*

In the time that I have I am not going to do what I normally do which is essentially to go through the things that I have been concerned about and the things that have affected my riding, my province and Atlantic Canada. I have been as partisan as the rest, I suppose, in the presentations that I have made and during Question Period. I do not have a prepared speech. I thought that if I just stood up here in 15 minutes I would state what really went through my mind, the thoughts that I will remember most in this Parliament.

I have to start with my constituents. I recall my maiden speech. We all remember that rush period before Christmas when we all had to get up and give our speeches and sit down. It was a bit of a nerve-racking experience. I did not get a chance to describe my riding. I do not intend to do it in great detail tonight, but I want to remind the House that I represent the east coast of Newfoundland. When the election results come out, my riding is the first riding to be announced.

The name Bonavista—Trinity—Conception represents the three great bays of Canada on the east coast of Newfoundland, probably the largest fishing area for a riding. I do have the largest fishing riding in commercial fishing in Canada. There is the scenic beauty, the tourist potential, each of the 250 communities and every one of them on the seacoast. Anybody who has been to that part of Newfoundland would have to agree that it is really a beautiful spot. It is a wonderful part of the world.

• (2010)

To balance that, of course, we are going through tough economic times, but I have spoken enough about that in the House. I am sure that my constituents all know that their requirements and their needs and their difficulties have been made known to me in the last four and a half years, and indeed by my other colleagues, so I will not go through that in detail tonight. The record I think speaks for itself.

I will come back to my riding. I want to talk about the pride one has in serving in this House. I can state that while I did not really have political aspirations I used to look up at the Peace Tower in awe and with great pride as a Canadian about what took place here, without really knowing the detail of what took place. Now that I have been through the detail, I suppose, in committee work, visits, trips, partisan discussion, heated debate, ups and downs, joyful times, sad times, difficult times and never

easy times, I have an entirely different perspective on the Peace Tower and what takes place in this place.

I am running again, as you know Mr. Speaker, and I hope to be back here again if my constituents agree. I suppose the most moving feeling one has after one term in this House is the tremendous ability and the depth of the individuals who represent their constituents, be it on the government side or the opposition side. I have yet to meet a member of Parliament from any party who has not done his or her best for their constituents. I have not always agreed and quite often not agreed with the philosophy of other members and their way of doing things, but as I have often said to my constituents, I will not criticize any organization for making operational mistakes or for making bad judgments. Occasionally if promises are made that cannot be kept then I will hold anybody to that aspect of either politics or life or anything of that nature.

It is very hard to single out individuals, but there are a couple of cases that I would like to mention which really have been an inspiration, if you like. On my own side, the hon. Leader of the Opposition has always been an inspiration to me. He has had some tough times and he has shown strength. I have great admiration for him and his family and the leadership that he has provided, particularly at this difficult time in the country and with the tough roads ahead.

Also the Whip and House leader, present and past, on my side of the House have had to work very hard to run in opposition. Being in opposition of course is a job that offers certain responsibilities and allows certain actions to take place that one would not experience in government. I have only experienced the opposition side and I say without any smart aleck statements that I am hoping in the next election I will have the opportunity to sit on the government side.

I have come in here some mornings feeling a bit like a hero for arriving early. One feels a bit smug arriving at seven o'clock, sometimes earlier. But I have arrived at seven o'clock in the morning. The hon. member who has just come into this House from Parry Sound—Muskoka whom I have come to know and have great admiration for is not that much older than I am but I think his years on me are somewhat noteworthy. I have arrived early in the morning to see his unmistakable car parked already obvious that he was here before me. I have gone home close to midnight, feeling that having punched in almost an 18-hour day I have been pretty hard done by and I