

Private Members' Business

ized. That kind of feeling is very destructive of the self-esteem and aspirations of native children.

It is possible for my children who are seventh-generation descendants of Irish and Scottish immigrants to look at Canada as a country that offers them more hope than their native neighbours who, to this day, claim legitimate ownership of this country. This is a problem still not resolved. Why does that happen? It happens because Parliament has not tried to resolve the unfinished business between Canadians and the native people of Canada so that we can live in this country as equals and that our children can look forward to a future of equal benefit to both of them.

• (1740)

What we need in this country is exactly what the member for Delta was talking about when he was talking about self-determination. The way we are going to succeed in having native children complete the education process and go on and become successful in the education system is to have native education systems. We will succeed when native children can go to school and learn from native teachers, learn aboriginal languages, and see their language, their school system and their teachers as being among the best in Canada and among the best that any other culture can offer. Then going to a native school is going to be perceived as something to do if one really wants to succeed.

When is native health care really going to serve the native citizens of our county? When the health care service is delivered by natives, administered by natives and oriented toward serving the community needs of native people of Canada. That is when it is going to be successful.

This Parliament has to realize that in order to be successful some of the power that we arrogate to ourselves or that the Department of Indian Affairs keeps to itself is going to have to be devolved and restored to those native communities that originally had those powers when they had their own right of self-government.

It is worth while that the member for Nunatsiak has presented this motion for debate in Parliament. I have made a suggestion that was based on a proposal made to the aboriginal affairs committee by the Assembly of First Nations. I think that Parliament should take this suggestion seriously. It is that Parliament should be prepared to

declare the 1990s the decade of aboriginal people in Canada. We have seen decades named similar to this before. We have seen the Decade of Women. We have seen the Year of Women in the Family declared by the United Nations.

Canada and this Parliament should take the step to declare the 1990s the decade of aboriginal people, setting as our objective the resolution of the unfinished business that exists between us and the aboriginal people of Canada. If we establish that objective for ourselves, then native people of this country will have something to look forward to.

It will be then that the statistics the member for Nunatsiak talked about will be equalized to the benefit of all of us. It will be then that we will be able to reduce the number of health problems among native communities and be able to increase the educational opportunities of native Indians. It will be then that they will have the same opportunities as the rest of us in Canada.

Employment opportunities will be equal because this Parliament will have established it as an objective and declared the 1990s the decade in which we are going to resolve this problem. I hope Parliament will take this suggestion to heart.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Charles DeBlois (Montmorency—Orléans): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have the opportunity today to take part in the debate on the motion presented by the hon. member for Nunatsiak (Mr. Anawak), who is to be commended for his interest in the well-being of Canada's aboriginal people.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment on the education system for aboriginal people. In Canada, aboriginal people and non-aboriginal people have access to education. This is part of being Canadian. For aboriginal people, education is probably the most precious thing anyone could give them. Why? The reason is simple. The aboriginal students of today are a vital resource, not only for their communities but also for Canada.

We all recognize that a solid education makes the ultimate goals of self-government and economic self-sufficiency attainable. There is no doubt that aboriginal people are also fully aware of this. In recent years, education has become a principal social concern. This