

*The Address*

On the east is the town of Meaford and in that surrounding area we have our famous Georgian Bay apples. The towns of Durham, Hanover and Chesley have an enviable history for their quality furniture manufacturing.

In my riding there are also two reserves, the reserves of the Saugeen and Cape Croker.

In Bruce—Grey, agriculture is an important economic way of life for many of my constituents. For the most part farming is focused on beef, sheep, poultry and dairy products.

The fact that I am standing here today proposing this motion of acceptance is a very significant event in the national policies of the Canadian government. I say that because somebody once mentioned that Canada was half-sister to the world.

I am from the Caribbean. Many people elected to this House are from that general area. This country of Canada has had great relations with Guyana and many countries around the globe.

Twenty-six years ago, Barbara Ward, environmentalist, thinker and distinguished writer described Canada as possibly the world's first international nation.

Canada more than lived up to that description in the years that followed. Its government and its citizens have shown a mature and sensitive concern for global security in all its aspects—political, strategic, economic, social and environmental.

Our international development assistance programs are evidence of that concern. Canadians have shown compassion for the welfare of the peoples of developing countries with whom they have mutual interests.

The fact that I am standing here today emphasizes another important Canadian characteristic and that is its ethnic diversity.

If Shakespeare had known Canada as it is now he probably would have written "sweet are the uses of diversity". Now that our country is truly a global village, Canada's multi-ethnic character fully coincides with that reality.

At no other time in human history have the peoples of the world had a greater opportunity to observe each other's values and belief systems as now. In Canada, on a daily basis, our very diversity accommodates meeting and sharing ideas and differing ways of viewing the world. This is an enormous Canadian strength because such dialogue is fundamental to us as Canadians. It is the base of our democratic process.

I entered federal politics because Canada, this wonderful democracy, allowed me to be Canadian. Canada has been good to me, my wife Verona and our two children, Andrew and Sonja. I feel that this country has given me a lot and I hope that in this House I can give back some of what it has given to me.

On October 25, 1993, the Canadian people gave us their trust with a mandate to govern our great country.

• (1600)

What I heard them say in the message to us was that they would like to see honesty and integrity in their national government. Not for one moment, as I look around this room, do I doubt that the men and women established here today are capable of that chore.

I also firmly believe that if we work together to maintain our heritage and cultural diversity, if we manage our resources both human and natural, Canada can continue to be the best country in the world.

I am noted for telling stories. I am reminded of a story of the great Italian Metropolitan conductor Toscanini. He was in New York at the famous Metropolitan Opera House; they were rehearsing for an up and coming performance.

A young soloist was not doing very well so Toscanini thought maybe he could give her some advice. The young woman scoffed at the advice and told Toscanini that she was the star of the show and in fact did not want any advice. Toscanini thought for a little while and then reaffirmed to the young woman that in a symphony there were no solo performances.

In this House one person cannot pass a motion. In this House all 295 of us were elected by the Canadian people to do a job and I hope we work collaboratively, not separately.

As outlined in the throne speech this government has stated its intention to keep its promises, specifically the agenda of the red book. That is why so many of us are on this side of the House.

A commitment to the principles of universal health care, a new apprenticeship program, restoration of literacy funding, the Canadian youth corps, assistance to small and medium sized business and a total redesign of our social programs was stated in the throne speech.

As mayor I handled economic development. I travelled to Europe and to the United States. I want to make a statement to all the members of the House. I believe that small businesses are extremely important to us. We must take the monkey off their backs. We must take away all the red tape from them. We must allow people to imagine, to dream and to get those businesses going. That is from where we will get the jobs and the hope for the Canadians we are talking about.

Since the election our Prime Minister has shown an example of frankness and frugality in our government. We announced a number of cuts the other day. The government whip announced that we were going to try to cut down on some of the perks to save millions of dollars in the coffers for Canadian people.

In conclusion I want to say sincerely to all members of the House, regardless of their political stripes, that I would like it if all of us would not work solo but would work hard for the taxpayers of the country. They are the ones who put us here.