

ever mindful of ordinary people. Through his activities as popularizing journalist and populist leader, René Lévesque was able to heighten, among the humblest members of our society, the sentiment of pride to be Quebecers.

We are all indebted to him. And if a strong nation is the legacy of the involvement of men and women selflessly devoted to their fellow human beings, René Lévesque will always stand prominent among great men in our national pantheon.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSIFICATION

Mr. Gabriel Fontaine (Lévis): Mr. Speaker, the Department of National Defence has selected a principal contractor for the construction of six frigates, the second set of a total of twelve.

The Department decided to deal with the contractor who had the additional of the expertise acquired in building the first six frigates. The contractor wants the frigates built in his own yards, alleging it would cost \$80 million more per frigate if he had to share the order with other shipyards.

I urge the Department of National Defence to ask the principal contractor to provide hard evidence of this additional expense, which I think is debatable.

In dealing with this issue, the Department of National Defence should consider that expertise in building frigates should not be limited to a single firm. Who would take over if things went wrong in that particular yard?

In any case, strategically, technically and economically, there is not a single country where the armed forces rely on a single supplier. We should certainly not be the first!

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● (1410)

[English]

THE CONSTITUTION

RECOGNITION OF ABORIGINAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

Mr. John Parry (Kenora—Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, last March the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), in his opening address to the First Ministers' Conference, stated that the explicit recognition of the right to self-government is an essential prerequisite to any constitutional amendment. Within weeks of those remarks, the Prime Minister was well on his way to cementing a constitutional deal that ignored his own public commitment.

On a policy level, the Conservative Government then cut off constitutional funding for aboriginal groups before the ink was

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even dry on the Meech Lake Accord. Canada's aboriginal people know it was principally the intransigence of Tory and neo-Tory provincial Governments which denied them the constitutional changes they sought to restore self-government to their communities.

Now that Quebec has been welcomed back into the Canadian constitutional family, the need to recommence constitutional negotiations on aboriginal self-government is even more pressing. The Government should immediately make a formal approach to the provinces in pursuit of this worthy and worthwhile Canadian objective.

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EDUCATION

NATIONAL FORUM ON POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr. Don Ravis (Saskatoon East): Mr. Speaker, the City of Saskatoon was very pleased to host the National Forum on Post-secondary Education which was held last week. I was privileged to accompany 500 delegates from across Canada in meaningful debate regarding the future of our education and youth in this country.

I wish to congratulate all those who participated, and extend special congratulations to the Secretary of State (Mr. Crombie) and the National Forum Committee for the outstanding organization of this conference. The forum committee will be presenting a report which will include recommendations to the Government for future discussion at the Council of Education Ministers.

This was an historic event as it was the first time that two levels of government collaborated on the future of education in our community colleges and universities, with the participation of people representing youth, education, labour, industry and all levels of government.

With the recently negotiated free trade agreement, qualified employees will be needed in Canada to remain internationally competitive. I believe the results of this forum will lead our labour force into the next century as leaders in the international market-place.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CLOSURE OF CANADIAN EMBASSY IN ECUADOR

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the Hon. Member for York West (Mr. Marchi), and I were recently contacted by a number of our constituents about the closure of the Canadian Embassy earlier this year in Quito, Ecuador. These constituents, many of whom have family and friends in Ecuador, are concerned about the