

Bélair in favour of Charlottetown agreement



LORDY, LORDY
LOOK WHO'S 40!

MP Rég Bélair, quoted in the Commons Sept. 10.

Mr. Speaker, it is with honour and with great pleasure that I stand here today to take part in this historic debate on the Charlottetown accord. At the end of the day we will have the vote that will be set down in history.

I would like to take this opportunity to join with my colleagues in the House in congratulating the minister for constitutional affairs, the member for Yellowhead, for his work. It has been a hard road for him as well as for all Canadians, but we now see the light at the end of the tunnel.

I believe that when one looks at the positive side, and there are many positive factors, of the whole constitutional debate that has taken place in recent months, one can only conclude that it has brought us closer together and has made us more aware of one another.

This proposal is a result of

numerous forums and public meetings, national and regional consultations with aboriginals, women's groups, with all kinds of organizations and business interests . . .

Canadians are eager to turn the page on the constitution. They are anxious to deal with another ailment, the economy. We have record unemployment in this country and we are facing many new challenges as we prepare for the 21st century. Now we will have the tools to face these new challenges as the country will function as a unit, as a team . . .

The commitment to linguistic duality also gives the two official linguistic groups an opportunity to flourish and to guarantee under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms the protections of individual rights.

For all of us, an economic union is of the utmost importance. How can we expect to be competitive in the world market when we cannot resolve our country's inter-provincial barriers? It is difficult to understand that we can have a free trade agreement with the United States and we can be taking part in negotiations on NAFTA, and yet inter-provincial trade has met with numerous obstacles with no agreement in sight. We must become united economically. I

strongly believe that protectionism defeats to a certain extent the spirit of the Charlottetown agreement.

In 1982 the Liberal Party enshrined in its constitution the inherent right for native self-government. I am very pleased that since then the concept has evolved and many first nation communities are prepared to determine and to control their destiny according to their traditions. However, this objective

"We are the envy of the world, and I am proud to be Canadian."

can only be attained if the federal government and the provincial governments supply them with the economic tools favouring a balanced development of the communities.

I do have some reservations about the senate. I really question the logic behind the allocation of senators. Do we really need a Senate in its proposed form? If we are to have a Senate, we must ensure that it is useful, and that it has adequate powers to be effective. Moreover, I fail to see how a senator could emulate his duty as a legislator as well as his constituent's needs. For exam-

ple, a senator in my province of Ontario would have well over 1.5 million people to serve. It is not humanly possible to both jobs adequately. It should be revisited, as it needs much improvement.

For the time being, we have come a long way and years down the road we will look back with pride and a sigh of relief at this period in history. Once again, I would like to say that I am pleased that on Oct. 26 Canadians will be voting in a national referendum. Canadians will, once and for all, put the record straight by voting to strengthen the bonds that bind our regions together and retain this country called Canada.

This morning I was standing in my office and on the wall I have a framed copy of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The quote at the end of the charter summarizes exactly what we are trying to accomplish: "We must now establish the basic principles, the basic values and beliefs which hold us together as Canadians so that beyond our regional loyalties there is a way of life and a system of values which makes us proud of the country that has given us such freedom and such immeasurable joy."

We are the envy of the world, and I am proud to be Canadian.

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Letter to the editor: another resident upset about the Schreiber Christmas tree

Do you know our Christmas tree on the hill is gone?

Yes, someone cut the tree down, if you can believe it. The tree on the hill that warmed the hearts of every Schreiber resident, young and old, except for one or two indi-

viduals. Jerry Thrower went to a lot of trouble and expense to brush out this area so the tree would stand out, and he put up a gas generator to light the lights on the tree.

All visitors in our town during December—as well as

people passing through—commented on the beauty of this tree and how it gave you the Christmas spirit.

I sure hope the person who did this now has their conscience bothering them, and I hope it will not let them forget this unforgivable deed they did in a moment of irrational behaviour.

Only the person who did this knows who they are. However, the truth will come out and the people of Schreiber will not be as fast to forgive as you were to do the deed.

Cassandra Brown
Schreiber

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NOTE OF THANKS

We'd like to thank everyone who attended our Stag & Doe on August 28th. A good time was had by all, even though there was some confusion about who should wear the ball and chain. A special thank you to Pat and Cathy Moher for organizing the evening and for being so patient while the Stray Cats went into extra innings.

Brad and Virg

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