

The other paragraph reads:

—we are disenchanted with government, primarily because it does not perform. We can say that we need, in pluralist society, a government that can and does govern.

**Mr. Gilbert:** You are on our side, Keith.

**Mr. Penner:** A long way down the Chamber, though. The paragraph continues:

This is not a government that "does"; it is not a government that "administers"; it is a government that governs.

**Mr. Gilbert:** Would the hon. member permit a question?

**Mr. Penner:** I would be delighted to entertain the hon. member's question.

**Mr. Gilbert:** I have always found the hon. member to be a delightful, courteous and kind fellow. I ask him whether we should give serious consideration to the statement of the deputy minister, which I quoted in my speech, that by setting up a Crown corporation Canadians would save \$200 million. It seems to me that we should give serious study to that proposition. Would the hon. member agree with that statement, and does he agree that on that basis alone the document should be shown to members?

**Mr. Penner:** I believe that we should give serious consideration to every recommendation by every deputy minister, but that we should not necessarily follow what they recommend.

**Mr. Jack Cullen (Sarnia-Lambton):** Mr. Speaker, I was frankly surprised that the hon. member for Broadview (Mr. Gilbert) did not see fit to accept the explanation of the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Laing), who gave the reasons why these papers should not be produced. I was surprised because until I heard some of the comments in his most recent address I had found him to be a fairly responsible and reasonable member of this Chamber.

● (5:50 p.m.)

There comes a time when leaders in government have to make decisions that the uninitiated, those who have never been members of the cabinet and who possibly never will be, would find it difficult to accept. There comes a time when a government must weigh all the evidence and ultimately make a decision. And when the hon. member received a most reasonable response from the Minister of Public Works, I would have thought he would have seen fit to accept it.

I was a little surprised at the somewhat bootlegged, unkind comment that the Minister of Public Works might be considered a caretaker in that position. As one who has had close association with the minister because of area responsibilities and works that have had to be carried out in my riding, I have found him to be anything but a caretaker minister. Frankly, he is dedicated to the job which the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has asked him to undertake. I would like to give a small example of this. The minister came to the Sarnia riding, ostensibly to unveil a monument to the first Liberal Prime Minister of Canada, Hon. Alexander Mackenzie.

### *Government Organization*

It would have been a fairly easy task to perform, just to come into the riding and make the appropriate speech. He did make an appropriate speech, off the cuff, filled with Canadiana and much sense. Others might say that having performed that particular function, he would have been happy to attend a party function and return to Ottawa. But not this particular minister, because he knew that a group of Indians were having trouble from erosion of the St. Clair River banks caused by ships going up and down the St. Clair. The minister made an on-site inspection and took notes. On his return to Ottawa he took up the matter with the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Chrétien) and as a result a portion of a seawall has been built in the most affected area. There is something to be said for maturity in cabinet ministers, just as there is something to be said for maturity in Members of Parliament.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cullen:** I notice the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) is clapping loud and long at that remark, but I think he had better look behind him because his colleague from Broadview does not seem to share that opinion. However, I hope the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre and I may be able to convince him that there is a place for mature members of this establishment.

I had not intended to participate in this debate because I knew that the hon. member for Rimouski (Mr. LeBlanc) and the hon. member for Thunder Bay (Mr. Penner), who preceded me, would give the hon. member for Broadview all the reasons and answers he needed. However, I was a little surprised at the unkind comments of the hon. member for Thunder Bay about government in general, because there is a tendency to be parochial and to feel that decisions such as the one made by the Minister of Public Works in this instance might not fit in with the Drucker theories. It is a bit unkind to condemn all governments. Governments have a responsibility to the people, and they have to operate within the ground rules that are established. I think the present government has endeavoured to do all it can, with a somewhat unwieldy machine, to give this country the best government it has ever had.

This is not an opinion that will always be shared by the opposition, but by and large I would say we have had pretty good leadership from the government and this party, bearing in mind that over the past 100 years it has been leading our country to the point where people who want to maintain Canadiana and Canada as we understand it today would see fit to change the way in which the ground rules are established.

The hon. member for Thunder Bay saw fit to attack one of our Crown corporations. I think the CBC is probably everybody's favourite whipping-boy. There are some things in Crown corporations that warrant attack. I happen to be privileged in that Polymer, one of the jewels of Crown corporations, is in my riding and is carrying out its duties exceedingly well. This morning at