

The Address—Mr. Mulroney

also make every effort to end the welfare cycle. We must fight discrimination in every form. We must restore the liberal policy of regional equality to ensure that all Canadians are given the same opportunities, wherever they may live in this country.

[English]

We need equal pay for work of equal value. We need affirmative action for women. We need a national child care program, not just further studies, as the Throne Speech indicates. I say to Ministers opposite: why do you not just get going? We have studies coming out of our ears; let us have a little action.

If we read the Throne Speech carefully, we find that they are backing down on pensions for women. We also need to become more competitive as a nation, concentrating on research and development, but also providing more harmony in the workplace. We need joint labour-management goals in terms of quality of work, profit sharing, and equality on the job. We need a more competitive economy. Competition is the best fuel of excellence.

Finally, we need to restore confidence and trust in Government and in our public institutions. We need to restore faith in the integrity of those we as Canadians elect to transact the public business of the country. I want to say to the Government and to the Prime Minister that people's trust has to be earned, that people's confidence has to be gained, not by improved rhetoric or flowery phrases in a speech, but by what we in every corner of the House do.

The Prime Minister is now asking for a second chance to show Canadians that he can be trusted. We are skeptical because the Government has violated that trust so blatantly and so brutally for the past two years. We are skeptical because this is a Government which has shown itself incapable of rising above pettiness and manipulation to confront the real issues we in Canada face. We are skeptical because we do not believe it has the competence to run the country as it should be run. It is for all those reasons that I should like to present an amendment to the Speech from the Throne.

Canadians have no confidence in the Government. Canadians have no confidence in the Prime Minister. Therefore I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Windsor West (Mr. Gray), that the following be added to the Address:

The House regrets, that at a time when 1,250,000 Canadians are looking for jobs; when the Canadian family farm is threatened; when the oil and gas industry is trying to hang on; when regional inequalities are being worsened by government inaction; when young people, elderly women and single mothers face extraordinary hardship; when average Canadians face huge tax increases while giant corporations get tax breaks; and when Canadians, from one end of the country to the other, are crying out for leadership and direction, the Government is trying to tackle the nation's problems with empty words and aimless rhetoric.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I find the amendment to be in order, and debate is now on the amendment. The Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney).

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I noted that my friend, the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner), had no substantial references in his speech to the plight, for example, of western farmers, but he had time to comment upon my clothes. The Leader of the Opposition made reference to the problems he was having with regard to the leadership of the Liberal Party. I just want to tell him that he can count on our unwavering support.

I want to commend you, Mr. Speaker, on your election. I could tell on that night when we all spent 10 hours or 11 hours here, that it would have a positive effect upon the mood of the House. As I was going around for one of the votes, I overheard a Conservative Member of Parliament say to another: "Do you spell Cops with a C or a K?" I think the Right Hon. Leader mentioned that he had the opportunity to vote for some Conservatives. Perhaps some Conservatives voted for others as well, and I think that was healthy.

• (1300)

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, the Report of the Special Committee on the Reform of the House of Commons contains a quote that is particularly interesting, in fact there are several, but I am referring to the one that appears on page 11, in which Bill Blaikie, the Member for Winnipeg—Birds Hill, says the following:

I think one of the reasons why a lot of people run for Parliament is that they feel they have something to say. I always thought that if I could just get to say these things in the House of Commons, that would be significant, it would matter ... However, since I have come to Ottawa, everything I say is suspect, if it is listened to at all. So there is this incredible frustration. What ought to be the pinnacle of exchange of ideas is in fact the black hole in which nobody listens to anybody.

That was a statement by an Hon. Member from Manitoba, a cry from the heart that did not fall on deaf ears, and I had the privilege of designating a committee on parliamentary reform, chaired by the distinguished James McGrath, ably assisted by the Members for Papineau, Winnipeg—Birds Hill, Argenteuil—Papineau, Peace River, Prince Edwards—Hastings and Surrey—White Rock—North Delta (Messrs. Ouellet, Blaikie, Mrs. Bourgault, Messrs. Cooper, Ellis and Friesen).

Mr. Speaker, I believe that even if there are times, and we had that experience the other night ... personally, when I was listening to the Members, specially the backbenchers who were all present and who resisted every temptation to quietly leave the House at one or two o'clock in the morning or to cut the procedure short—the fact is Hon. Members were anxious to affirm their sovereignty over this House. It was the Members of this House who exercised their authority as Members by