

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity in recent years to work very closely with youth particularly in the riding I have the honour to represent, the riding of Sherbrooke, and even though it is mainly in the field of sports that I was privileged enough to be associated with youth I think it is still one of the fields where one is in the best of positions to appreciate the real merits of Canadian youth.

However, I should like to suggest to hon. members that the Canadian government has done a lot for youth in the past few years. I should like to list a few of these accomplishments.

• (1710)

For instance, just three or four years ago the Canadian government lowered the voting age from 21 to 18. It has also created summer jobs under the Opportunities for Youth program launched three or four years ago and established youth hostels throughout the country. Inter-provincial exchanges also receive some financial assistance from the federal government. These exchanges are made between the various provinces and the two territories of this country, not to mention the contribution of the federal government in the field of international exchanges. Study trips abroad and through this country are also paid by the federal government.

We could also mention the role of the government in the field of amateur sport which was given considerable grants. There is also a national housing policy aimed at helping the students who, in certain cases, have enjoyed preferential interest rates. The loans the students were eligible for have been raised from \$1,000 to \$1,400, with a \$50 monthly tax exemption for a post-secondary full-time student.

Mr. Speaker, we have 84 federal assistance programs for youth in Canada. It would be impossible for me to describe them all at this time but I would like to mention one of them which I think is essential. It is the Young Travellers Program.

This program concerns students who have been selected to travel to various provinces. The federal government, in co-operation with the Secretary of State, the ten provincial governments and those of the two territories and also with several Canadian municipalities undertook a few years ago to organize these travels. Reports published after those travels have demonstrated just how much the students did appreciate those travels and the annual reports express their wish that the government continue this program.

The federal government also intends to implement additional programs even though this is not quite within the scope of Bill C-13 whose purpose is to proclaim a National Youth Week in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I only have one objection: as can be found in the explanatory notes of the bill this youth appreciation week would be the third week of November. As far as French-Canada is concerned, you know that the month of November has always been associated with the deceased and this is why I would not want youth to be associated with November. I should prefer that week to be in April or May, a period of the year more readily associated with the concept of youth.

Youth Appreciation Week

Another point perhaps worthy of consideration, Mr. Speaker, is that if we have a National Youth Week there is a risk that youth might be neglected during the 51 other weeks of the year.

I agree with the hon. member for Burnaby-Richmond-Delta that during at least one week of the year emphasis should be placed on young people and their role in our country.

There is also another aspect to this matter, Mr. Speaker. Young Canadians work not only in Canada; they also work in other countries. I am thinking of those who work within Canadian programs such as CUSO, for instance, and who do a lot of good. This is seldom pointed out. In some countries, our young people have worked with considerable success, as the leaders of those countries have pointed out; but unfortunately, the Canadian people are often not even aware of their work. I feel that an appreciation week like this one, while stressing what our young people do in Canada, could also stress what they do abroad.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to mention that during my years as a teacher, there was a poem about youth which always interested me greatly; it was written by Kipling and translated by a famous French writer. I do not know if it is in order in the House, but anyway, I find it is closely related to the point made by hon. member for Richmond-Delta, and I want to recite it. Here it is:

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or, being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools;

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on";

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with kings—nor lose the common touch;
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;
If all men count with you, but none too much;

If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run—
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger): Order please. Before I recognize another member, I would like to point out to the hon. member for Sherbrooke that under the rules it is allowed to recite poems but not to read them. Therefore, the hon. member was in order.