

*The Address—Mr. Loiselle*

Under careful supervision greater use can and should be made of builder-proposal types of construction to reduce building costs and the parallel overhead costs encountered within the department.

With these few remarks about what I think is a very important department within the government, let me say I look forward to the thirtieth parliament with perhaps a bit of trepidation, but also with a good deal of determination on my part to make it work.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernard Loiselle (Chambly):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the population of the constituency of Chambly, I would like to congratulate you for having accepted the position of Speaker to which you have been appointed by this House. I would also like to congratulate my two colleagues who moved the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, the hon. members for Montmorency (Mr. Duclos) and for Vancouver East (Mr. Lee). I believe that the quality of their speeches demonstrated that the contribution of the young members can be both serious and effective in this House.

I would now like to deal with the measures outlined in the Speech from the Throne and particularly with those to fight inflation. I am sure that all the members of this House recognize the need to protect adequately and effectively the most needy, all those who cannot protect themselves against inflation, and I am thinking about the senior citizens, the pensioners, the sole supports of families. Finally, there are those who, because they do not belong to a union or an association of some kind, cannot face the disastrous consequences of inflation. The government has clearly shown its intention to act in this area by implementing measures such as regular increases in old age pensions based on the cost of living, the increase of veterans' pensions and other measures already mentioned. Another group which we should seriously consider is the middle class which must often bear the heaviest financial burden of all these measures that are implemented to help those in need. To this effect, Mr. Speaker, I believe that our government will act to better distribute the cost of all these measures so that those who are already well off in our society will pay the greater part of the cost of these new policies that will have to be put forward to ensure a better redistribution of the wealth of this country.

For the middle class this government intends to make financial help available under its housing policy to reduce the cost of land and promote development, to help directly new owners through increased assistance to buyers of moderately priced housing who have not owned a home before, and also through initiatives to urge lending institutions to accommodate particularly those buyers who can afford only a small down payment.

Another area, Mr. Speaker, in which this government will act firmly will surely be the food area because it affects Canadians the hardest. I am sure the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) and the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ouellet) will be the main artisans of that program since it will be a matter of monitoring excessive price increases in that area of the economy.

[*Mr. Ellis.*]

Another step mentioned in the Speech from the Throne is help to the small and middle businesses to increase our output. That program is most commendable because, however spectacular it might be at times to announce investments of the order of several million dollars and the creation of hundreds of jobs, it must not be forgotten that the present economic structure of this country is based first and foremost on small or middle businesses. It is only by ensuring the help required for its development that we can consider setting up a solid long term economy. To promote help for small and middle businesses we must first define what is a small businessman to be able to really understand his problem.

● (1740)

It must be kept in mind that a contractor with some fifty or a hundred employees used to be just a craftsman. Also that this craftsman who has become a medium-sized employer has often seen his business develop in spite of himself or without any control over its development.

Therefore, faced with his enlarged business, this contractor is often helpless when he has to perform some specialized work to ensure a smooth operation. Everybody agrees on that, but not on the means to meet those needs. The formula of assisting those contractors by increasing our public servants is quite questionable. I do not think it is the best way. I believe we should follow the example of Quebec which encouraged a few months ago, through the Minister of Industry, Trade, and Commerce, (Mr. Gillespie), the regrouping of some fifty contractors who will pay for collective specialized services.

The advantage of such a system, which already exists in a number of countries including France, is obvious. In France, this system proved highly successful, for it involved the regrouping of over 4,000 French businesses; after seven years they set up their own bank, the third largest in France. I feel this is an example to be followed. This system which proved successful should be applied here, for it has this advantage: both the small businessman and his firm are under the constant supervision of technicians they have hired and who, therefore, are their employees. So, they are not bothered, they do not have to spend much time on this type of work because it is a time-saving service for which they pay.

There are in our ridings some people—I know hundreds of them in mine—who, after starting as mere welders, found themselves, after a few years in business, faced with cost accounting productivity and general administration problems.

As for multinational corporations, a recent survey has shown that to carry out those duties, an average of 23 university graduates were hired. The small contractor, who must also meet those requirements, has surely not the means to incur those costs.

Too often, we deal with the small or medium enterprise as technocrats without ever having stood on an oil-stained cement floor or been in a place where some wood shavings were flying around.

It is easy for a recent university graduate who has no idea of an eventual loss to give to the contractor all the required good advice. However, since he has never experienced the problem, too often the contractor is frus-