

*Government Orders*

I would ask my hon. colleague from Lincoln who has delivered such an impassioned, reasoned address: What should be the criteria? He mentioned in his discourse that the criteria for social benefits must be based on need which would preclude then that social benefits should be determined by want. They should be addressed on need and certainly I think most members in this House would concur. What will be the criteria for need? Has the hon. member opposite given any thought to what the criteria should be for those who are to receive social benefits from the taxpayer?

**Mr. Valeri:** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. I would certainly like to recognize once again that the hon. member does agree with the whole process and I thank him. We are certainly on the right track. I am hearing from my constituents that consultation is long overdue and is something our government is moving on quite rapidly.

When I reflected in my discussion on what the town hall participants said I was reflecting what my constituents have said to me. One of those things is to assess our programs and try to make them more effective and more efficient.

When it comes to need, we are absorbing that information from the constituents and from the various sources of information and different processes that are available. Once the consultation period is over we will be coming forward with very concrete responses to that question.

**Mr. Stan Dromisky (Thunder Bay—Atikokan, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I was most impressed with the delivery and the content of the message given by the hon. member for Lincoln, as well as the hon. member across the way from Edmonton Southwest.

**Mr. DeVillers:** Somewhat less.

**Mr. Dromisky:** But somewhat less.

However, the member across the way recognized the importance of the red book this government has been using for guidance, a bible as one might call it.

This publication is the result of the efforts and contributions of tens of thousands of people over a two year period. It is a beautiful example that for the first time in the history of this country the democratic process was put into operation prior to an election over a very lengthy period of time. It produced an enlightened document and provides us with the guidance we so require in order to guide this country out of the turmoil it is presently in.

• (1825)

I would like to point out, as the member for Lincoln has pointed out, that the democratic process we have been using is very time consuming. It is true. If this was a dictatorial system,

we would have an answer immediately. Because we adhere to basic, democratic principles, we will always listen to the people for guidance. That is exactly what we have been doing with the document pertaining to our social network and social services.

As a result, from coast to coast, a multitude of strategies have been put into operation. We are, as our eloquent speaker has already pointed out, receiving the type of guidance that is required to be sure that no one is suffering because of drastic changes in financial support or human resources or any kind of policy whatsoever.

**Mr. Valeri:** Madam Speaker, I can only repeat once more that the whole process is about listening first and then leading. That is the leadership Canadians have asked for and that is the type of leadership they will receive from the government.

**Mr. Leon E. Benoit (Vegreville, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I too have a question or some comments for the hon. member. We have seen two types of consultation take place in regard to this process. The first type is members of Parliament consulting directly with their constituents. Certainly Reform has been doing that for some time. I am pleased to see that the Liberals have picked that part up. That consultation has been very useful.

The second type of consultation has been through the human resources development committee. That is the travelling road show. It has been much less successful. I liked the hon. members comments on that.

A young person approached me in my constituency. He said he had been invited first of all to Calgary to meet with the minister to discuss advanced education on less than 24 hours' notice. This young person was then invited to the meeting in Edmonton. He was cancelled from the meeting in Edmonton. The person who told him he was cancelled said to him that the committee is in a shambles.

I would like the hon. member to comment on that.

**Mr. Valeri:** Madam Speaker, I want to address the hon. member's comment on consultation. Certainly he realizes that he does not have a monopoly on consulting with his constituents. The Liberal Party has been doing that for some time.

As far as the committee is concerned and whether it is working properly, nearly 500 requests came into the committee for the western portion of its trip. The committee is functioning. Canadians have an opportunity to appear before the committee and I encourage more to do so.

**Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate the hon. member for Lincoln for his speech this afternoon. Obviously the hon. member has a firm grasp on the importance and relevance of this issue to Canadians and to his constituents in the riding of Lincoln.