

Commonwealth Caribbean

educational leaders of the two regions with a view to stimulating a north-south exchange of goods, people, services and technology in a mutually advantageous way.

He said: Mr. Speaker, to me this is not a new subject. As some of the veterans like the venerable hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) will know, it is not a new interest of mine.

Whatever else is uncertain in this political career, and I have found it more uncertain than ever in the last few months, this will certainly be my last notice of motion speech on anything.

● (1602)

I have found that while it is quite a treat and, indeed, sometimes an extremely difficult thing to get into the House of Commons, I am among a small group of people who are finding it quite difficult to get out at the date of our choosing.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Some whom we would like to get out will not go.

Mr. Macquarrie: I noticed the former minister of justice across the way this morning, and I had a fellow feeling with him on the situation in which we find ourselves.

I am happy that my last motion under private members' hour should deal with a subject very close to my heart and on which I made a speech in my youth when I sat over there and spoke on a motion by the hon. gentleman who now sits in the other place, Senator McIlraith.

In recent months I have had to live with a personal embarrassment in that I have said goodbye to so many people and have been bade goodbye by so many people and find now that I am apologizing for being around.

Mr. Paproski: It is nice to have you back.

Mr. Macquarrie: Thank you, sir.

I do give the promise that I will eventually go, and that is a firm commitment, with all the uncertainties of the present political situation. I can say that this parliament will eventually end, and that we will not need a Cromwell to say, "In the name of God, go". I think we will eventually be dissolved.

When I first spoke on this subject matter, Mr. Speaker, I sat on your right. I was a government supporter. I am about to leave the House of Commons when it seems that in a few months my party may again be given the opportunity of sitting on the Speaker's right. I have never felt like a biblical figure before, and I suppose I never deserved to feel like a biblical figure, but it reminds me of Moses, who could see but not enter the promised land. But I do see it, I see it clearly, and I am delighted with what I see.

My interest in this subject matter has not diminished over the years, as I have become more familiar with the people of the Commonwealth Caribbean and with the area itself. As I have been, I remain a committed believer in Canadian involvement in the outside world, even though at this time we have enormous and painful internal economic problems.

[Mr. Macquarrie.]

I have heard, as one is bound to hear, the mutterings, rumblings and grumbles of those who say charity begins at home. I have heard the sour notes of those who point to our own problems, and sometimes they indicate that one has pointed them out from time to time from public platforms. I have never been terribly upset by these people, because I have always believed that those who say that charity begins at home are not usually too charitable at home themselves, so they are not my advisers. I am convinced that despite our stresses and strains, our national problems and our crises, we gain perspective if we recall that we are a part of the greater world. That, I think, is the credo of a good international citizen and a leading member at its best of the international community, as Canada is.

It is never very profitable to spend much time in navel gazing, hand wringing, or problem gathering. This is not a useful exercise. As Mr. Pearson said more than once, in the face of our internal difficulties we gain strength rather than diminish ourselves by giving of ourselves to the outside world. Of course there are questions we should ask about our programs for the outside world. We should ask about the nature of these programs, the types of programs and, in general, our capacity to aid efficiently the developing world. I am happy that the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence, through an important and valuable subcommittee, has looked into this matter in a most searching way and intends to do so again.

To abandon the world because of our internal anxieties and weaknesses would, I believe, be a supreme lack of faith. There are questions which we should ask. One which I have often asked in the last 15 years is whether or not we have our priorities right. I will not use the terrible conglomeration of letters called "priorization". That word is even worse than the word disincentives or the word patriation. What we should ask is what we should do, how we should do it, and where. Even at its best, even at times of great economic strength, the Dominion of Canada could not mount, support, and sustain a meaningful program of assistance for 70 or 80 countries all across the world, so we must develop priorities.

I have never had any hesitation in where I would place my priorities. Commensurate with our capacity, based upon our contacts, our knowledge, and our friendship, I would say that there is no place abroad where we could do more effective work, develop more meaningful contacts and be more significantly helpful than with the nations of the Commonwealth Caribbean. It seems to me that their needs are commensurate with our capacity, or perhaps it would be more graceful to express it the other way, our capacity is more commensurate with their needs. With this area we can see clear prospects of aiding them, even the weakest among them toward a state of economic viability and prosperity.

I think that it is only right and proper that in all such programs of aid we ask, "will our contribution make a difference, will it show up in developing those goals for the people to whom we are extending our aid?" This is a manageable thing to do. Indeed, it is possible that it might make the difference