

Company of Young Canadians Act

Mr. Mark Rose (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, in speaking in favour of the two amending motions which we are discussing at the same time today I would first like to say that I am struck, perhaps even perplexed, by what the minister said in his speech on January 28 on second reading stage, and the contradiction I find between his enlightened, philosophical exposition at that time and what we find in clause 4 of the bill before us. I read from *Hansard* the minister's words printed on page 2941:

Our youth are active participants in our society, and although we wish to encourage their participation they are in many ways independent enough, aloof enough, to undertake a critical analysis that is impossible for our generation. I do not wish to set up youth as an independent alter ego screaming in the darkness. Rather, I wish to argue for a legitimate voice for youth in our structures just as I would argue, and have argued, for a legitimate voice for all people in our society.

Youth in particular have a point of view; youth in particular have an analysis. The fact is that what we do today determines the society in which they must live tomorrow. The mistakes we make today, they must undo tomorrow. Surely, this is reason enough to grant them full and equal participation in our society. The worst possible thing that could happen, in my opinion, would be a return to the dull fifties, the period of navel contemplations by youth.

I would like to emphasize the words of the minister which I read earlier, Mr. Speaker:

Rather, I wish to argue for a legitimate voice for youth in our structures—

Now, I find in reading the clause we are discussing, clause 4 in the bill, that:

There shall be a Council of the Company consisting of not less than seven and not more than nine members, who shall be appointed by the Governor in Council—

That is a very interesting juxtaposition of two viewpoints. Anyone can see at a glance that if there is no contradiction between the minister's views and what we find in the bill, then we have before us at the very least a dramatic excursion, and this causes me to wonder whether the minister really believes his own words. If he does, then he must have been subjected to some extreme pressures which caused him to support this particular clause.

How does he say, "I wish to argue for a legitimate voice for youth in our structures" on the one hand, and then go to the length he has in denying that very voice in the councils of an organization designed to attract youth to help overcome some of society's ills? It seems incredible to me and to my party that, in the age of alienation and struggle for par-

ticipation, the minister would consider such a reactionary move. I believe he should reject it out of hand.

This is an era in which there exists a great push towards shared decision making. We have emerged from the Apollonian era of apathy and acceptance into one which seeks to extend democracy far beyond the simple one man-one vote concept, and perhaps into a new age where the governed and those governing them are continuously in dialogue.

I think a glance at our daily newspapers will confirm to us the fact that the students, the labour unions, the Indians, the blacks, the tenants, the poor, and the anti-pollution groups are all hammering on the doors of whatever establishment is at the moment constraining them, depriving them and frustrating them. They are knocking on these doors because above all else they want to be able to participate in those decisions—the rules of the game, if you like—that are likely to affect their lives, and they want to do it more than once every four years. In fact, they are demanding that this voice will not diminish. I do not think there will be a return to a former period of navel contemplation, to use the minister's words. On the contrary, society must adjust to this hunger for a voice or I believe the only alternative is for society to arm itself for some violent reactions. I realize the minister knows all of these things and probably agrees with me on most of them. That is why I find it impossible to understand the reason for returning to a totally appointed council concept, as if this were going to be some magic solution to all of the problems associated with the CYC.

Let us review CYC history for a moment. First of all, we had two and a half years of the CYC with a completely appointed council. Included on that council, I might add, were some of the men who are today very important in government circles behind the scenes. The CYC was constantly in hot water then because of the failure of these men, and of others, to do the job adequately. Then, after these two and a half years, we had three or four months last fall of an elected council. Ten of the 15 members were to be elected by or from the volunteers, and five were appointed. But the same story prevailed. There was lots of controversy and the CYC was in for more than its share of hot water. Then, just before Christmas we heard the powerful voice of Mr. Saulnier of Montreal, and a tremor was felt throughout the land.