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more a part of this country as a result of that presentation. I do not know where the steel industry is going. I hope that the Hon. Member's presentation to the Americans will help them to work out the difficulties that we have.

The Hon. Member was trying to figure out what the point was about the provincial Government in the Province of Saskatchewan. The people of Saskatchewan recognize the point very clearly, that a Tory is a Tory. It does not matter whether they are federal or provincial. The de-emphasis on training and success of individuals working collectively within our society for the benefit of each other is no more evident than in the Province of Saskatchewan. There is a desire on behalf of the people to work collectively to achieve group ends. The Government of that province and the commitment that this Government is making through federal legislation is not in the same vein as that of the people of Saskatchewan. That was my point.

• (1730)

Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville): Madam Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to participate in the debate. I would like to narrow in on just one aspect of the debate, something that I think is a blemish on our society. It has been alluded to here today several times—illiteracy. It seemed to me the pre-election commitment to illiteracy was very strong on the part of those sitting opposite. In the Speech from the Throne, there was a lessening of commitment. That of course was after the election. Now I find mere tokenism has set in and that should be accepted as a compliment because it is not quite that.

Whatever the reasons for the Government to arrange things in that sequence, which are obviously political, it is clear that illiteracy results in a great loss of potential both for the state and for the individual. Its over-all effects are often hidden. They impinge on economic development, or lack of it, and on unemployment. On the personal level they impinge on health, social malad-

justment and the general well-being of those identified in our society as illiterate.

The importance of literacy can hardly be overestimated. The social, political and economic structure of the modern community rests on the assumption that every citizen can communicate and be communicated with by means of the written and printed word.

There are any number of definitions of literacy. The one that I like is the United Nations definition of literacy. It is an old one now, but I think it is still pretty valid:

A person is literate who can, with understanding, both read and write a short simple statement on his everyday life.

Failing to be able to do that, according to UN standards, a person is considered illiterate. In this sense literacy is viewed as a means of self-fulfilment and full participation in society. The last figures available show that one in every five Canadians over 15 years of age does not qualify as literate and therefore is not able to reach self-fulfilment and full participation in society. That is an alarming statistic and one which we can be truly ashamed of in a rich country that prides itself on being so civilized. One in five over 15 years of age is only able to function on the periphery of life, having to stay in the background in many respects. Another interesting statistic is that illiteracy increases as we move from west to east in Canada. It is an interesting point.

Illiteracy increases then in Canada as we move from B.C. to Newfoundland. Luck plays a part in it. Being disadvantaged plays a significant role, but luck is still a very important component. I do not think that luck is a good way of equalizing opportunity in Canada. To attempt to identify the social effects of illiteracy is extremely complicated. Complex relationships including various factors affect an individual's social outcome. Cause and effect are very difficult to separate. It is therefore more accurate to discuss circumstances associated with illiteracy than to speak of its effects or its results. Those with low education tend to have poor health—that has been established—a shorter life expectancy, more disabilities of one kind or another. All this can be statistically proven. Other circumstances often related to illiteracy are poverty, unemployment, personal