

there was a call about a second person in jail. I received this information on Good Friday night. That night I phoned Washington, and Dallas and other areas. I phoned all over in order to try and have these people released. They were finally released, but due more to the help of the Salvation Army than to the help of the government. Where we failed, they succeeded.

Later on, when the telephone bill came in, I knew I would not be reimbursed but I decided to apply anyway because it was a fairly dramatic case which had received national publicity. By the way, it was quite a considerable bill. What happened? I was not paid because I had phoned from my riding instead of from the House of Commons. I gather I should have got into my car and driven back to the House of Commons in order to make the phone calls. If that is not the height of stupidity I do not know what is. It is absolutely absurd that a member cannot work on behalf of his own people and charge the cost to the government or, to you Mr. Speaker, with all respect, to the House of Commons. That type of thing just should not be tolerated in an age when we are trying to get people to participate yet deny members the means to do anything when they do participate.

In addition, I believe the work schedule of the House of Commons should be arranged in such a way as to allow us more opportunity to get into our ridings and find out what our people are really thinking. If we want participation, we have to be there at first-hand to make it a reality. I believe there are steps that could be taken. Whether we sit three weeks out of the month, have two days off, or whatever the arrangement might be, we should be able to visit our ridings more frequently in order to do a job for our people. In our complicated society there is more to being a Member of Parliament than sitting here in the House of Commons. There is more than just passing legislation. We have to communicate and deal with our people so that we know what they want. If they feel they can tell us, and that this has some effect upon us, we will rid ourselves of a great deal of unhappiness and dissatisfaction in this democratic society.

I also believe that the federal government, perhaps in conjunction with the provincial governments, should establish information offices across Canada to help cut through the terrible rolls of red tape and confusion surrounding the federal system, and the complications it has for our citizens. Many people, when they have a problem, do not know whether they should come to the federal government, to the provincial government or to the municipal authorities. I believe well-publicized offices should be established, with zenith numbers, so that members of the public could phone them free of charge to find out where they may lodge complaints or offer advice and get through the kind of red tape that exists in our society.

In addition, I believe that schools and other institutions should be supplied with educational materials, films etc., dealing with the nature of our government and the provincial and federal areas of jurisdiction. As I said before, there is not much use talking about federalism if we do

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not communicate to our people precisely what it is, its benefits, how it operates and how to deal with the system.

We also need constructive public affairs programs on television to sell federalism and the democratic process. We have seen too much on television that tends to divide and destroy this nation and its institutions. Surely it is not too much to ask the CBC to do something more positive for society, rather than to carry on as it has so often in the past. I think we have been too authoritarian in the past on small, unimportant issues and have not spent enough time looking at the direction in which our society is going and trying to do something to change that direction. Perhaps we need some kind of a research centre to study the problems of democracy and Canadian unity so that we may really know what to do about them.

There are other ills that cause general disrespect for those in authority in Canada. As an example I mention the Quebec medical strike. Many people in our society—this has nothing to do with politics—have a feeling that professional people, doctors, lawyers, you name it, really do not care for anything but themselves and their own pocket-books. I am afraid they are often right. The Quebec doctors' strike gave us an indication that they had in mind motives other than looking after the sick of that province.

When medicare was introduced in Ontario I was revolted that doctors were charging 10 per cent more than the rate paid by the provincial government. I said to one doctor when I was in his office, "You should put up a sign and we will take up a collection for you poor fellows. Perhaps in that way we can do away with this 10 per cent charge." All you have to do is look at the statistics to find out how much doctors earn. They are not very poor. The same applies to the banks. Everyone has the impression that if you need money you can get it from anywhere but a bank. If you have money, you can borrow more money from a bank; but if you do not have money a bank will not look at you. The man in the street has lost faith in banking institutions as being of any meaningful help to him.

When the white paper on tax reform was issued I attended quite a few meetings in my riding. People continually rose and said, "Look, Mr. Cafik, if we thought that our tax dollar was being used for a constructive purpose we would not mind paying higher taxes, but we feel it is being wasted." If people in our country feel we are squandering their money, surely to God it is of national concern to us because such a feeling is bad for a society such as ours. If we are wasting money—and I have been on the Public Accounts Committee when it has been discovered that we have wasted money, not in this but every other government—we should do something about it.

● (9:10 p.m.)

We should adopt a stance where we as a government care about the public purse and really intend doing something about it. When we find mistakes in spending, surely we as a responsible government ought to say that we recognize it and will do something to change it,