

introduce a real sunset law so that Crown agencies would be required to come at regular intervals and to justify their need to exist, before a committee of parliament. We would vest in committees of parliament the powers and the resources to start their own inquiries so that we will never again have the atmosphere of continuing cover-up that has characterized this last decade of government.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: We are a country in trouble but we in this House have to recognize that we are also an institution in trouble. Canadians are sceptical about parliament and, unfortunately, some of our own members play to that scepticism.

This parliament, sir, is the only Canadian institution which can reach and reflect the whole great diversity of Canada. It has been muzzled and limited in recent years. Parliament must be renewed if the nation is to be renewed. The obligation to lead in this House and in this country rests with the government. They showed yesterday, as they have shown repeatedly, that they are just too tired to lead.

My colleagues and I have a deep faith in this country. We know that there is a potential here no other nation shares, a potential for freedom, a chance to build, and an opportunity to excel. We will help this government in its dying days if it has anything to propose. But particularly after the further disappointment of yesterday's Speech from the Throne I cannot disguise our determination to form a new government, a government that is worthy of this country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: We have a motion before us to approve an empty program. We in this party cannot approve yet another refusal by this government to govern. Therefore, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker), that the following be added to the address:

This House regrets to inform Your Excellency that your government is unable to provide effective leadership for Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to join the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) in congratulating the movers of the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. Both movers drew their inspiration from the purest of liberal traditions, one by applying the concept of liberty developed by John Stuart Mill and the other by expressing the concern that this government has always had towards those in our society who are most in need of protection, and particularly senior citizens. Of course, I also share the feelings expressed by the Leader of the Opposition towards His Excellency the Governor General and his wife. I think that we will have other opportunities to extol the merits of these distinguished people and that we should do so some other time.

The Address—Mr. Trudeau

I cannot offer quite the same type of congratulations to the Leader of the Opposition. I recall the theses that were explained to us a long time ago when I was studying experimental and rational psychology and when we were told that the brain has three faculties: The first is memory, the second imagination and the third intelligence. As concerns memory, I can congratulate the Leader of the Opposition. He made a few blunders and a few mistakes about figures, but on the whole he recited his text well and his memory did not mislead him too often. As for imagination, he really took first prize for his litany of charges and illustrations. What we have seen is an overheated imagination creating a quite extraordinary fantasy in describing a situation which has no relation with reality. However, as concerns intelligence, I must say that it was left behind. There is not much food for intelligence in this text. I do not know if this is how the authors of his speech wanted to show their contempt for parliament or the Canadian people or perhaps only for the Leader of the Opposition. But whatever the case may be, it is certain that in view of the great many errors stated by the Leader of the Opposition, we must conclude, Mr. Speaker, that imagination beats intelligence every time.

Let me give a few examples before getting into the gist of my statement. Heavens, where to start? He talked about Sky Shops. We all remember of course that for several months in this parliament, opposition members were muckraking a senator who had been brought before the court. This indeed is typical of the "scandals" that the opposition is constantly bringing to the attention of parliament. As it is, the House knows, the courts ruled that the charges brought against Senator Giguère were not founded and he was found not guilty. The only use that I see in recalling this unfortunate incident is to somewhat shame the opposition which has used innuendos and slander, if not outright libel, to dirty the name of certain persons, forgetting afterwards that they were found not guilty and forgetting their accusations, but on the contrary repeating them again before the House as they have done today.

● (1602)

[English]

We heard a great deal about a lot of other subjects. We heard, for instance, that this is a very centralizing government. No figures were put forward by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark). However, just out of memory, I am sure most members of this House could give some very clear figures. If you take the last ten years in this country, total government spending has gone from a percentage of 32 per cent of gross national product to 40 per cent. The growth of governments at all levels has increased by a margin of about eight in this period of ten years. Four of those eight points have been accounted for by spending by the provinces, two and a half by the federal government, and one and a half by the municipalities. This is what the Leader of the Opposition calls a centralizing period in our history. He should at least look at the facts.