

I would request the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Drury) and the Minister of the Environment (Mrs. Sauvé) to take steps to look into this particular problem and instruct their respective officers to make a report thereon which may, hopefully, lead to more concerted corrective action than has been evident to date.

The next point on which I wish to speak is that of over-all government expenditures. In the attempts over the past several years of elected representatives at all three levels of government to provide an increasing level of service in various facets affecting the lives of ordinary Canadians, we may have unwittingly moved closer and closer to a point, in terms of over-all government expenditures, that could be beyond the ability or willingness of the producing segment of our society to sustain. I believe this matter requires immediate attention at the three major levels of government—federal, provincial and municipal—and that the impetus for such action should emanate from our national government. I make this recommendation, Mr. Speaker, with no suggestion that we should not continue to evolve new, and improve old, areas of government services to the people. The point to be made is that the time may have come to consider substituting some new for old, rather than simply adding on in all cases.

I want to speak briefly on the matter of the provision of social benefits in monetary terms to the less privileged—economically speaking—members of our society. I commend efforts being made to re-establish the incentive to work philosophy in new areas of social policy as they are being conceived and developed. The work ethic continues to come under criticism, and in some cases attack, by certain minority groups within our nation. However, we have not as yet developed any other acceptable alternative to a healthy combination of the work-leisure ethic that assures an adequate level of over-all production of goods and services to meet both the direct needs of the Canadian consumer and his indirect or public-supported needs that are paid for out of tax revenues provided by the working segment.

While it is essential that our national government at all times lend a listening and sympathetic ear to all segments and individuals making up the fabric of our society, the parliament of Canada must at the same time ensure that close attention is paid to the encouragement and protection of the majority of the members of our society who, in the final analysis, must be relied upon to shoulder the combined burden of their own needs and the established needs of others.

As a Canadian who, by virtue of place of birth and later place of residence, has been fortunate to have had at least some exposure to both the French and English elements within our Canadian framework, I would encourage direct national government involvement in greater promotion of the teaching of both history and the French and English languages for future generations of Canadians—even if we were to start with those as yet unborn. In my view, these two essential aspects to a more mature understanding of the Canadian fact and way of life are at this point receiving completely inadequate attention at the more tender ages when learning experiences really get under way.

The Address—Mr. Ellis

Particularly in the field of bilingualism, it is my opinion that we may be tending to place a little too much emphasis on the adult segment of our society, possibly at the expense of too little concentration at the earlier levels of youth where, in my view, it can be so much more effective over the long-term. I would go a step further and simply state that, in the interests of our developing nationhood, we may no longer be able to afford the luxury of avoiding some form of direction national thrust into the entire educational field in order to ensure the attainment of some basic pre-determined national objectives.

In concluding my initial remarks to this thirtieth parliament, and as a newcomer to the House of Commons, I would like to add my support to efforts that may be made over the next four years or so toward meaningful parliamentary and constitutional reform that will assist in more fully developing our national potential and leading to greater independence and a more mature interdependence among other nations of the world. As one small contribution to the matter of parliamentary reform, I would recommend consideration of changing the House rules in order to limit the time for the speeches in the throne speech debate to 20 minutes rather than the existing 30. This would have the beneficial result of enabling either a reduction from nine to six in the number of days currently allocated to this debate, or alternatively permitting some 50 per cent more members to speak and make their views known to this House and, through it, to the nation.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I wish to end my first speech in this House with the words I used to begin: it is truly an honour and a privilege to express my views before so distinguished an audience.

[*English*]

Mr. J. R. Ellis (Hastings): Mr. Speaker, in beginning my contribution to the debate this afternoon, I am particularly pleased that Your Honour is in the chair. In offering my congratulations you will know I am most sincere when I say how pleased I am that the hon. member for Sudbury (Mr. Jerome) has been given this great responsibility. May I also tell the House that a few months ago I enjoyed sharing an open line program with him. I have questioned myself since whether that open line program was at all responsible for his assumption of this high office. To the Deputy Speaker, the hon. member for Beauharnois-Salaberry (Mr. Laniel), I give my congratulations on his accession to that particular post. If he does as well as the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants (Mr. McCleave) in the last parliament, then he certainly will be doing a fine job.

● (1720)

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Ellis: May I also congratulate the Deputy Chairman, the hon. member for Thunder Bay (Mr. Penner), who seems quite capable of growing in that position, and the hon. member for Louis-Hébert (Mrs. Morin), a gracious and charming Assistant Deputy Chairman, as I am sure all hon. members will agree.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Ellis: Since the good people of Hastings have seen fit to send me to this august chamber for a second term, I