

*Supply*

The bottom line is that the Government of Canada has many programs to address the legal and social responsibilities of Canadians. It is time that we started to share the load and see other groups in society, including provincial governments, come to assist us and to recognize that they must take their share of responsibility as well.

**Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor—St. Clair):** Mr. Speaker, I must say that I regret that the hon. member for Edmonton Northwest was unable to finish his four-hour speech. I am sure it would have been very interesting.

Earlier we heard the member for Fundy—Royal give a very vigorous and positive appraisal of the Court Challenges Program, leaving all of us to wonder what defence he could possibly have offered for discontinuing a program that cost \$2.3 million as compared to \$15 million for almost any average government publicity campaign.

Then we hear the member for Edmonton Northwest talk about the importance of removing barriers among the various groups in this country. He talked eloquently about multiculturalism. He talked about the necessity of full participation. I do not know whether he realized, however inherent in what he said, was the necessity of empowering the people who are disadvantaged by race or ethnic derivation to defend themselves.

I have to ask him what his reaction is since he did not mention at all the question of the Court Challenges Program what he thinks within the context of what he said about the discontinuation of that program, a relatively inexpensive program, particularly now in view of what he said about racial discrimination, since the director of that program was about to embark on encouraging racial minorities to use the program more effectively than they have in the past and how he reacts to the deferral of the Race Relations Institute. But most especially, in view of what he has said about the necessity of ensuring that every Canadian, regardless of their ethnicity or racial derivation, participating fully in this country as equal citizens, and the fact that the members of his party on the constitutional committee along with the Liberals refused to support an amendment to section

27 as a recommendation that would have added these words: "and the preservation and promotion of racial and ethnic equality", how can he reconcile that to what he has just tried to tell the House? I am sure he is sincere. I want to know if his defence of his government is on that account.

• (1940)

**Mr. Dorin:** Mr. Speaker, I was not on the constitutional committee. Therefore, I do not know what kind of deliberations took place. I am going to say this.

The member made reference to my four hour speech and I think that speaks for itself. I spoke for 20 minutes, simply discussing some of the programs that this government has in place to support the legitimate rights of all Canadians to a better quality of life. I could have probably gone on for four hours trying to get through all of them. The fact is because of its unique contribution to human rights, unmatched by any government or any party at any level, this government has earned the right to insist that this crucial responsibility now be shared.

I would hope that the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier who proposed today's motion would seek the agreement of his colleagues and members of the NDP to ensure that all provinces and territories now take up the challenge by demonstrating some political will of their own.

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question I would like to ask the member for Edmonton Northwest dealing with testimony which was put to the Standing Committee on Human Rights and the Status of Disabled Persons, by the Deputy Minister of Justice, I believe, to the effect that there were mechanisms in place to allow Canadians to go to the Human Rights Commission or to the Official Languages Commission as an alternative to the Court Challenges Program.

He and others in the House know that the Court Challenges Program was specifically put together by the Liberal government in 1978 to deal with constitutional issues under the BNA Act, extended to the 1982 charter of rights by the Liberals again, and then in 1985 to section 15. That is the course of events of that program.