

This secretariat would be resident in northern Ontario and it would comprise provincial and federal personnel from the area. There ought to be an ongoing body which would oversee development in northern Ontario and to which the people of northern Ontario could apply for redress or improvement in their living conditions.

These are only some of the proposals I make to the government with respect to development in northern Ontario which has been sadly neglected over the past 100 years. I remind the government benches that the Prime Minister was very concerned about eradicating regional disparities. We have very serious problems with respect to regional disparity, and I think it is time they were looked at. It is obvious that members on the government side who represent this area have not been raising the issues.

With regard to the pipeline, the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Andras) recently came to northern Ontario with some minions from the area and suggested a review of the route of the pipeline from Sarnia to Montreal. That is just a palliative to the people of northern Ontario. The decision was made by the cabinet. Mr. Speaker, I call on them to reconsider that decision in light of the kind of development that can take place in northern Ontario. We have been ignored too long. I call on the government to pay attention to the present situation and to take action now to correct some of these discrepancies.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Frontenac-Lennox and Addington (Mr. Alkenbrack) wishes to ask a question, but the only extension of time can be for the hon. member to complete his speech. Is it agreed that the hon. member should have the right to ask a question?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Alkenbrack:** Mr. Speaker, during his speech the hon. member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez) read letters from constituents complaining about and protesting the spiralling cost of living under this government. I now ask the hon. member why he voted against the subamendment only one hour ago which indicated lack of confidence in this government in the words "... because it has not taken effective and immediate measures to stop the increase in the cost of living".

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. There is a very simple rule that one does not reflect upon a vote that has already taken place in the chamber.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Jeanne Sauvé (Minister of State for Science and Technology):** Mr. Speaker, I should like at the outset to congratulate His Excellency the Governor General and thank him for having accepted his new responsibilities in that public service spirit that he has shown throughout his extraordinary career. As for Her Excellency Mrs. Léger, who always admirably supported her husband, we already see the stamp of her extraordinary readiness of wit and of the great warmth of personality in everything she has undertaken during the short time she has discharged her duties.

*The Address—Mrs. Sauvé*

I hope I may also express the great satisfaction I find in seeing again Mr. Speaker in the Chair to preside over our debates. He shows great ability and tactfulness in the fulfilment of his duty. He succeeds in moderating our debates. He even manages to curb the eagerness for criticism which is of course the essential part of this House, provided those criticisms do not in their overzealousness, go beyond their purpose, which is to serve the people. The Speaker helps a great deal to bring our debates to the level required by the high responsibility of this House. I am also delighted to find around him the team that supports him and contributed so much to the success of the last session, which is of good omen for the session we shall now go through.

It is in accordance with the usual practice to congratulate the mover and the seconder of the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. I must say that I am doing so today most sincerely and not only to comply with a practice of this House.

● (1620)

They demonstrated with exceptional eloquence their concern for the welfare of all those we are here to serve, and behaved in the best of parliamentary traditions.

While listening to them, I could not refrain from thinking that the backbenchers on this side of the House are filled with talents and, like the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), I find this very encouraging and feel that, as long as the Canadian people is willing to assure us of its trust, this party in the House has the necessary personnel to come up to its expectations.

The extraordinary contributions of our members to the proceedings of the committees of the House is ample proof of this. I have been told that 77 hon. members took part in 626 meetings of the parliamentary committees which were created and in operation during the last session. Mr. Speaker, that means exceptional regularity of attendance made necessary, of course, by the existence of a minority government. The parliamentarians from this side of the House met that great challenge with honour and deserve to be lauded for their sense of service and fellowship.

They have decided to serve their constituents here although, as many of us, they would have liked to be with them more often. All of us in Parliament have suffered from not being able to communicate with our constituents as much as we would have liked.

As far as I am concerned, during the session, I had to cancel four or five meetings that had been organized in my riding in order to fulfil my parliamentary obligations. Of course I did so most regretfully, but parliamentary duty came first. You will tell me that Parliament is in minority for everybody and that my remarks are irrelevant but I would like to remind you that absences do not have the same effect for the opposition as for Cabinet members, who are vested with the initiative right of government and with the responsibility of parliamentary stability.

Our duty was undoubtedly to be here, in the House, I admit it. But is parliamentarism better served by the attitude of the opposition which takes advantage of circumstances, with many members being absent one day and reappearing the next day in number in order to force,