

add, on this side of the House, on their election on September 4 of this year. Finally, I wish to congratulate all Members of the House on their election to Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank all those who helped me in this and previous campaigns. First of all, the people who voted for me in 1974, when I was running for the Municipal Council of Cumberland Township, as well as those who voted for me in 1976, 1978 and 1980, and last but not least, the voters of Prescott-Russell who elected me as their Member of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario in 1981, and finally, the voters of Glengarry-Prescott-Russell, who voted for me on September 4 of this year and sent me to this illustrious House. I think the mandate the Government received on September 4 is very impressive, and I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that you will agree that this Government, now that it has obtained the support of 50 per cent of the voters of this country, definitely has a mandate to lead the country. A word of caution, however: they must recognize the mandate of the Opposition, that of all Members, and the aspirations of all Canadians. Mr. Speaker, we must not forget that even if 50 per cent of the voters voted for this Government, the other 50 per cent did not.

● (1510)

The Government must therefore recognize and even help the opposition parties by providing them with the tools needed to discharge their responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, on September 4, we, of the Liberal caucus, were elected to be the Official Opposition in this House. Ours is also a very important mandate, and, interestingly enough, it will have to be discharged with 40 members as against 40 cabinet ministers. This means that each and every Opposition member is called upon to be an official critic for a department. This again is a very important task which, I am convinced, every member in the Liberal caucus will fulfill with our customary vim and the energy of our leader, the Right Hon. Member for Vancouver Quadra (Mr. Turner) along with the 39 other Members in the Liberal caucus. I am convinced that with such a dynamic team, we will very successfully carry out that mandate.

I would like to thank our leader for selecting me as the Opposition critic for Supply and Services. This is an area I find most interesting, Mr. Speaker, because it has been my former privilege, as a Canadian civil servant, to be a purchasing agent here for the House of Commons, and to work with the Department of Supply and Services.

Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Glengarry-Prescott-Russell is a very special one in my view. Of course, every member in this House feels that his or her constituency is very special, and understandably so. Glengarry-Prescott-Russell is at the eastern tip of Ontario, east of the City of Ottawa. As opposed to what some people may think elsewhere in Canada, east of Ottawa we are still in Ontario. My constituency has an area of 3,137 square kilometres and lies east of the National Capital. It includes such communities as Orleans, Rockland, Embrun, Alexandria, Vankleek Hill and others. It has a few industries,

but it is a farm constituency, especially the eastern part. Ottawa suburbs make up the western part of the constituency.

The area is Loyalist country, except for the Longueuil seigniory which is part today of the Prescott constituency. It is interesting to note that today 64.6 per cent of its citizens are French-speaking and, still more interesting, that 20 per cent of the French-speaking constituents are unilingual.

I think that this very fact makes the French-speaking citizens outside Quebec in the Glengarry-Prescott-Russell riding a very special group.

The average wages of electors in Glengarry-Prescott-Russell are slightly lower than those in the rest of the country. This means that our riding needs help from the federal government and that the cuts announced last evening by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) will affect the electors of Glengarry-Prescott-Russell.

The people in Glengarry-Prescott-Russell, Mr. Speaker, wanted action and a government which would take action on some issues. My constituents want positive action on women's issues, for the benefit of the handicapped, manpower training programs and improved conditions in the years to come. I suggest that those are the aspirations of my constituents of Glengarry-Prescott-Russell and very likely of all Canadians as well. But what have we seen over the past few days? A throne speech which offered nothing and an economic statement yesterday which made cuts across the board. That is not the way to improve the economic situation of my Glengarry-Prescott-Russell constituents.

I see that my colleague the hon. member for Gatineau (Mrs. Mailly) does not share my views. I am sure, however, that when she goes to Buckingham this weekend, on Saturday, her own constituents will impress on her that these cuts are a mistake. The hundreds of thousands of workers who will lose their jobs within a few months, a great number of them both in my riding and in the hon. member's, will find out that this is no joke, that it is very sad for one to lose one's job because of the action taken by the hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson).

Mr. Speaker, I should like to remind the House of a few historic events which took place in my riding of Glengarry-Prescott-Russell.

[*English*]

Some of the more interesting historical features include the fact that Samuel de Champlain came into our area in 1613. As well, it is in the eastern part of the riding that the battle of the Long Sault with Dollard des Ormeaux took place. This battle was fought between 17 French Canadians and 44 Indians against some 1,000 Iroquois. This battle took place just east of Hawkesbury in the vicinity of the community Chûte à Blondeau in my riding.

The riding also has some very interesting political history. Thomas D'Arcy McGee, one of the Fathers of Confederation, was a candidate for the provincial riding of Prescott in 1867. It is also very interesting to note that he was defeated in that