

scope. But see him they could. My colleague from Rosedale was, as minister, and is now as a fellow member of Parliament, as unremote and as accessible, as concerned and feeling a public figure as anyone I have ever known while watching this House of Commons. The Minister of Justice, the new minister of state for social development, could well learn from my hon. friend from Rosedale the way to communicate ideas to people. I know from personal experience that the hon. member for Saint-Maurice is no slouch at personal rapport with his colleagues and with other public officials at home and abroad. My point is that the minister and his new department must learn to communicate with the average Canadian on the all-encompassing impact of his portfolio on the Canadian people.

I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that all members of this House would quite happily agree to promote the aims and objectives, both short term and long term, of the "people" side of this new ministry. We could, for example, devote some space in our householder mailings to all of our constituents, to let them know the importance of this legislation we are now debating in terms of how it will benefit the individual Canadian consumer and family unit. I know I for one will be awaiting with interest some specifics which I can announce to the people of Hamilton-Wentworth, and to reassure them that this is not simply another level of bureaucracy, another giant super department, another eight to ten million expenditure for openers, another duplication of already established government services. I want to be able to assure the 75,000 people I represent that this exercise of setting up a Ministry of State for Social Development will encourage people to get involved in their communities, will encourage volunteerism, will encourage initiative in the private sector, and will make individual Canadians feel that we are not just OHIP numbers or SIN numbers or statistics of one kind or another. People are sick and tired of that kind of mass anonymity. We are people, Mr. Speaker, we are individuals, and we want an opportunity to express ourselves about the future course of social policy of this government.

So, Mr. Speaker, we will do what we can to educate the consumer, to give Canadians a sense of confidence about this legislation, provided that we on this side are absolutely convinced that, as I said at the outset of my remarks, this trip is really necessary.

I would ask the minister: how will he measure his success as head of this new super ministry? How will he define that success this time next year? How will he look at it five years from now? Obviously the minister must have some idea of his objectives and goals or he would not have taken on this portfolio. Obviously he has discussed this social development ministry in cabinet with his colleagues, like the Minister of National Health and Welfare or the Minister of Employment and Immigration, since they will be coming to the new minister for their funds for the most advantageous use in any given year. I think it is incumbent on the government in general and on this minister of social development in particular to tell the

Social Development Ministry

House what gauges, what criteria, he will be using to assess his performance in his new ministry.

I note the minister's own statement raises a couple of questions which it would be worthwhile having him answer. In his statement he said:

Since the ministers work within a predetermined expenditure ceiling, new high priority proposals can be financed only by cutbacks in lower priority programs elsewhere within the social sector.

What are those low priority proposals which may be cut, Mr. Speaker? The minister says that he will announce this "conscious ranking of social priorities". I should like to know when he will announce that ranking of social priorities. How will this new minister improve upon the cost effectiveness of the current programs of these social departments and agencies which now exist?

As the hon. member for Brampton-Georgetown (Mr. McDermid) said, we on this side will surely be assessing his performance in the light of what has been said here yesterday and today. It does not usually take long for the media to judge the effectiveness of a new department, and if the minister is really doing his job well, we will also note the consequent ineffectiveness of other socially oriented departments that he is embracing. As a result, in about a year from now our constituents will clearly draw their own conclusions as to the wisdom of setting up yet another ministry with its attendant bureaucracy.

● (1600)

Bigger government is not always better government, Mr. Speaker. But I have confidence in the hon. member for Saint-Maurice, the Minister of Justice. I hope that his new super department will be a rare exception to the rule that bigger is not always better. I want to wish the minister luck in finding enough time to contribute, to give proper input and to set down guidelines for the development of this ministry along with his responsibilities for federal-provincial relations, as Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada. In principle, the new ministry of social development is go for those of us on this side, but how that principle will be implemented is something we will be watching very closely indeed.

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, in introducing the resolution which we are now debating to provide for the establishment of a Ministry of State for Social Development, the minister gave as one of the main reasons the following, and I quote:

—to assist the government in integrating current social programs and developing more equitable social policies for the future.

Members of our party would agree completely that developing more equitable social policies and integrating present programs is a very laudable ambition. After the minister said that, the rest of his speech was devoted to demonstrating why the government really has no intention in the foreseeable future of developing any new programs. Indeed, what the minister was saying when he introduced this resolution was that the real purpose of the ministry was to control expendi-