

Speech from the Throne

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, for a few days now, like some other members, I have had a feeling that I am wasting my time listening to the political speeches of the members of the opposition. I have always felt a certain amount of respect for the House of Commons but, since I have come here, I have much less respect for some of the members, who whine and whimper, complain for nothing and about everything, refuse to see the other side of the coin, ridicule, destroy and try to undermine the confidence of the Canadian people in the government and its ability to rule, in spite of failures which, very often, are none of its doing.

Obviously, the members of the opposition are making speeches these days that pertain neither to the Speech from the Throne nor to the routine proceedings in this House, but indeed to the coming election campaign. Yet, their constituents elected them to co-operate with the government when the time comes to pass good legislation such as that contained in the Speech from the Throne. In fact, the opposition has systematically tried to obstruct the passage of many bills since the beginning of the current Parliament. Their constituents will have the right to ask them to give an account of the quality of their so-called obstruction; frankly, I would hate to be in the shoes of a wavering Progressive Conservative, a foiled New Democrat or a swaggering "Caouettiste". I am firmly convinced that Canadians will renew the present government's term of office and strengthen it both as to quality and quantity.

I have had the privilege, Mr. Speaker, of serving for nearly four years now the riding of Madawaska-Victoria. I have served it loyally, honestly and with great dedication. In spite of the distance separating me from my riding, I have still been able to remain in contact with most of my constituents, mainly thanks to the co-operation of the regional weeklies and radio station and also to the indispensable communications tool of modern civilization, the telephone.

Before I go any further, I want to congratulate the mover and seconder of the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. I can tell the hon. member for Bruce (Mr. Whicher), whom we all respect here because of his dedication to the area he represents, I want to say that his continued energy and courage in the face of the repeated but futile attacks of the opposition are two of his major qualities, and we, government members, appreciate him for what he is, a man of integrity, a conscientious and energetic representative of citizens and interests of the riding of Bruce which I had the pleasure of visiting last spring, and of which I have excellent memories.

I must admit, Mr. Speaker, that I am a little less acquainted with the new hon. member for Trois-Rivières (Mr. Lajoie). I am, however, aware that he came to us following a by-election, determined to grapple with the problems of his region with the same determination as his lamented predecessor. I wish the hon. member for Trois-Rivière a long political career and great satisfaction in serving his constituents.

I can now speak, Mr. Speaker, of my own riding, of my province, and at the same time of the Atlantic region. I wonder where my riding would be now, without the millions of dollars the government has poured into it over the

[Mr. Corbin.]

past four years. Quite recently, I was still meeting people who asked me to explain why so much money has been allocated to northwestern New Brunswick in recent years.

They are right, Mr. Speaker. For example, and this is far from being a complete account, in the field of education, the federal government has paid to the New Brunswick government \$6 million for the construction of composite and trade schools in the Madawaska-Victoria constituency and in the field of culture, the Secretary of State has given to various groups grants amounting to \$60,000.

Under the Opportunities for Youth program of 1971, the young people of my area have received \$90,000.

Under the Local Initiative Program of 1972, my area has now been awarded by the federal government a total amount of \$1,150,000 to create 800 jobs.

Under the regional economic program, many industries have obtained from the department concerned grants totalling over \$6 million.

The Central Housing and Mortgage Corporation has granted loans for some \$3 million, thus encouraging the construction of low-rent housing and older citizens' dwellings, a thing which had never been done previously.

In agriculture, because of a very desperate situation, especially for potato growers, the federal government twice came to the help of the industry, by paying millions of dollars for price support.

The government has also helped to finance improvements to the regional airport at Edmundston, and the fight against pollution in the St. John River, by spending \$3 million. It has provided several millions to improve the educational level of a large number of our fellow-citizens.

I do not want to run through the whole list, Mr. Speaker, and weary hon. members, but, apart from ordinary, administrative and current expenses for the numerous services offered by the Canadian government, the subsidies paid in the last four years have exceeded those of the 25 preceding years to reach a total of approximately \$25 million.

I am being told that there is only one Progressive-Conservative member in the House. I do not believe that he is listening to me, that one. But there is nothing new in that.

The people of New Brunswick Mr. Speaker—

• (1510)

[English]

Mr. Dinsdale: I am listening to every word.

Mr. Corbin: You are very kind; I thank you and I congratulate you.

[Translation]

—are presently under a Progressive Conservative government and I wish you would find time to make a short visit in my poor province to see what is going on. I wonder how long still this government could survive without the substantial financial contributions it gets from the federal government.

Since the beginning of this session, as in previous sessions, we have heard numerous criticisms directed against the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Marchand) as to the true effect of his subsidies on industrial