

The Address—Mr. G. Scott

ruled out of order for discussing something that is not at present before any committee, I feel it is terribly important that the subject of sexually abusive broadcasting and indeed the whole area of pornography and violence toward women and children in particular be discussed here in the House of Commons.

I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to a namesake, David Scott of Toronto, who is chairman of an upcoming symposium on media violence, for some of his thoughts. He is watching the pornography issue very closely, as is Rose Dyson who has done a remarkable job on this pornography issue.

The depiction of sexual violence has proliferated in the mainstream of media entertainment in all media modes from TV to mainstream film to pornographic magazines and tapes. Gratuitous violence and sex combined with violence have been introduced by programmers, editors and directors to vie for a larger share of the media market. What is most sickening to me, Mr. Speaker, is the effect on kids as the use of violence dominates media programming. The mainstream media legitimizes sexual imagery and our children become desensitized and disinhibited to aggressiveness in a sexual sense and to society at large.

A young man committed suicide in Edmonton earlier this week mimicking a suicide that he had seen on a rock video performance the night before. As usual, police and school officials were terribly distressed after the fact. Speaking about rock videos, let me congratulate the Government of Ontario for its determination to control these excessively violent tapes.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): A study released recently of Pay TV movies on all channels shows that more than 50 per cent of titles are labelled "restricted" by the Censor Board of Ontario and by the Motion Picture Board of America. That is equivalent to at least half the theatres in Canada which anyone in this Chamber would not let their kids visit because the material is too raunchy. More than half the children of the Hon. Members in this Chamber right now have only to flick on their family room TV set—if they are hooked up to Pay TV and can afford it—and their kids can watch this pornographic stuff which is available. We sit back and watch all of this happen!

● (1610)

I will close by saying that I can think of no one single issue that is more important to society at large than dealing with this issue of the spread of pornography. Even as a former journalist I will not buy the red herrings of freedom of speech and censorship. This is a much greater problem to deal with than those traditional arguments indicate.

I suggest that the faster we can get an all-government level conference on pornography in terms of how to curb its spread, the better the country will be.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): Questions, comments and answers? Debate.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Antonio Yanakis (Berthier-Maskinongé-Lanaudière): Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to have this opportunity today to take part in the Debate on the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, and I would like to start by congratulating the movers of the motion, namely, the Member for London West (Mr. Burghardt) and the Member for Lévis (Mr. Gourde). They both spoke with much conviction and showed great pride in this beautiful country of ours. They spoke eloquently about the spirit of co-operation that exists in their respective ridings, and they quite rightly underlined the problems they would like to see resolved in order to improve the circumstances of their constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I say without hesitation that the Speech from the Throne is the most impressive speech I have had occasion to hear during my eighteen years in the House of Commons, and I was therefore appalled when I subsequently heard the Leader of the Opposition and the absolutely meaningless comments he made in his reply. Not a single constructive proposal from his Party! How does he expect the voters to hand the reins of power to his Party someday, unless he proposes a better alternative to the present Government's constructive policies? I don't think they ever will.

The media are almost unanimous in their praise for the many measures announced by the Government to enhance the well-being of Canadians at all levels of society. A number of commentators are even saying we will not have enough time to implement them all. I say it is up to the Opposition to stop its obstruction in the House and let us go ahead with the measures announced by the Government.

Mr. Speaker, this House has just witnessed, during the last three years, the longest parliamentary session in Canada's history, a session that can rightly be called historic, and that started in April 1980 following the fall of the Clark Government after nine months in power. It would have been impossible to predict the difficulties, challenges and victories the session held in store. We now can be proud of the obstacles we were able to overcome together, including a world-wide recession which severely affected all Canadians and deteriorating conditions for world peace, and we can also be proud of implementing one of the most important social and legislative programs in our history.

At the beginning of this Parliament, many Canadians were anxious about the future of our nation when the Quebec Government asked for the opinion of the population of the Province on the occasion of its long-awaited referendum on sovereignty-association. Those who rallied to the cause of Prime Minister Trudeau to preserve and strengthen Canada won a well-deserved victory and a vote of confidence in a united country within a renewed federation.