

*The Address—Mr. Gérin*

In Etobicoke North, as in the rest of Canada, we have witnessed a significant rise in the number of single-parent families. The issue of daycare is, therefore, becoming increasingly important to us. It is encouraging that the Government has proposed the creation of a Parliamentary Task Force to study the future of daycare. Undoubtedly, positive solutions will be proposed to effectively deal with this important issue.

Seniors' issues are as well vital to my constituency. More than 18 per cent of the population of Etobicoke North is over the age of 60. There are several large senior citizens' developments in the riding. We must ensure that those Canadians receive sufficient benefits in their retirement. I am pleased to report to my constituents that positive action in this direction is forthcoming in the Government's proposed legislation to extend the income-tested Spouses Allowance to those aged 60 to 64, and as well, in the legislation to enhance the financial situation of veterans.

• (1610)

The Government has shown its progressive nature through the proposals put forth in the Throne Speech which dealt with legal reforms. It has only been within the last 10 years that the Government and agencies have made positive steps toward aiding those individuals who, tragically, have become the victims of crime. It is a most unfortunate situation when a society spends much of its taxpayers' dollars incarcerating criminals and only a fraction on aiding and assisting the victims of crime. I am pleased that the Government intends to work in conjunction with the provinces toward developing policies designed to provide more assistance to those who have fallen victim to crime.

I am also pleased that impaired driving will be addressed. The issue of impaired driving has received much publicity in recent years and is a truly vital concern. One only has to speak to the parents of a victim of an impaired driver to realize the importance and gravity of this issue. My constituents are no strangers to this problem. The programs to reduce impaired driving, now being used by police forces all across Canada, were initiated in Etobicoke North. However, government legislation is not the only means by which to curtail impaired driving. Equally as important is education. Through education we can teach our children the dangers of such actions.

In conclusion, I would like to add a few personal comments. As I look around the House and see my colleagues, I am filled with confidence and hope. With some of them I have become good friends. I look forward with anticipation to working closely with them all. But, what I see most is tremendous potential; potential that I am confident will translate into success. Why am I confident? Because Canada is a country which is truly blessed. We have enormous potential for development, not only with respect to our natural resources, but, more importantly, with our human resources. It is individual Canadians who are the key to our future. No doubt there will be difficult times ahead. Everyone will have to pull

together and contribute. I believe that our Government has set a fine example.

To be very honest, this is a totally new experience for me. I have much to learn, but I believe I have something to offer. I am excited by the prospect of being a member of the team which will put Canada back on track. Under the leadership of the Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), Canada will once again become a great and prosperous nation.

[Translation]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Hon. Member for Gatineau (Mrs. Maily). Question or comment.

**Mrs. Maily:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate my hon. friend from Etobicoke North (Mr. Pennock) for speaking so eloquently to women's issues.

[English]

I want to tell him how proud I am to be a member of the caucus with enlightened people such as himself. I would also like to assure the House that a combination of men like the Hon. Member and the 19 women who have been elected to the Government of Canada will ensure that the women of Canada make the progress for which they have been waiting for a very long time.

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

[Translation]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** If there are no further questions or comments, we shall continue the debate. The Hon. Member for Mégantic-Compton-Stanstead (Mr. Gérin).

**Mr. François Gérin (Mégantic-Compton-Stanstead):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for giving me this opportunity to take part in the debate. I suppose you realize what it means to rise in the House of Commons for the first time, even if one has been pleading cases in court for many years.

I also wish to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your appointment. I know you personally, and I am sure that you will perform your new duties with great skill and competence. From my seat, which is quite near the Chair, I can see it is not always easy to bring down impartial rulings, and I am sure you will perform your new duties with consummate skill.

On this occasion, I would also like to say a few words about the work done by my predecessor in the House, Mr. Claude Tessier, who was the Member for Mégantic-Compton-Stanstead for ten years. During that time, he worked very hard, both in the House and in his riding, in a riding that, I must say, is not an easy one.

The riding of Mégantic-Compton-Stanstead has 65 different municipalities, and for the benefit of my Western friends, I should explain that this means 65 different mayors. Whenever the Government launches a program like Canada Works, for instance, 65 mayors, often responsible for very small communities, each want a piece of the pie, in other words, their own program for their own municipality.