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it is, it is nevertheless a routine without much clout. Any attempt to dwell on a specific area is turned aside.

Having said that, some of our special committees, for example, the Special Committee on the Disabled and the Handicapped, have done an outstanding job at getting to the heart of the matter and initiating specific recommendations. The Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Smith) referred to this earlier tonight. He was chairman of the Special Committee on the Disabled and the Handicapped, and my seatmate, the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Hudecki), also was a member of it. That committee made up of members from all sides of the House did an outstanding piece of work. Unfortunately, again because of the system, action on many specific recommendations encounter needless delay. Alternatives are available to make greater use of committee time and effectiveness. It has been suggested at other times that annual reports of any department or government body be automatically referred to the appropriate committee for thorough investigation. This would give them more adequate opportunity to inquire into the needs and operation of a given department. It would also make for a better use of committee time resulting in a greater degree of accountability.

Another area of concern to me as a member, and I am sure to many members on both sides of the House, is that constant pull between the House and the constituency. Constituents legitimately expect a Member of Parliament to be at their beck and call. While parliamentary procedure decrees a member's presence "on the Hill", this sometimes results in a member being neither here nor there. A Member of Parliament is required to play a number of important roles. A Member of Parliament, as I have already mentioned, must seek to be a legislator in debating and amending legislation. A Member of Parliament must also act as an ombudsman for thousands of constituents who have problems in dealing with government and its agencies. A Member of Parliament probably meets with a more varied and diverse group of individuals more often on a day to day basis than a person in any other occupation. A Member of Parliament must be in a position to relate to factory workers, farmers, lawyers, engineers, office workers, the medical profession, teachers and professors, those in administrative positions and so on. A member must be ready to adjust to the particular subject matter at hand. Unfortunately, there is often not enough time to prepare oneself for these varied tasks.

• (2140)

Any reform must take into account the need of the member to be in the constituency on a regular basis and for a sufficient length of time. Now there has been some indication that sitting hours should be amended, allowing members more time in their constituencies, and that some votes on division be deferred to times agreed upon by House leaders in concert with the Speaker, rather than members be required always to stand by waiting for that bell to ring and then drop whatever they are doing to rush into the House only to wait until enough

members on both sides of the House assemble for the voting ritual.

I am sure the frustration which many members feel is because the talents and skills which brought them so-called success in private life do not count as much in the total operation of Parliament. Having said all this, Mr. Speaker, I realize that these views coming from one of the newer members in the House may seem rather presumptuous to veteran members who, I know, have long contemplated parliamentary reform. Indeed, I recognize that there have been significant and positive parliamentary reforms. Since 1968, committee investigations have been initiated and are frequent. Parliamentary task forces have been created. The research capability of individual members of each of the parties and of the Library of Parliament have been substantially increased. In addition, the operational facilities provided for the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Clark) and the Leader of the New Democratic Party have grown considerably, hopefully allowing each to fulfil his official role more competently. But more needs to be done. I have given these views in an attempt to initiate further parliamentary reform and therefore to provide a better system in which we may better represent the citizens who elected us. On that note I feel very privileged and honoured to represent the riding of London West, a riding made up of people who really care and, I have first-hand evidence of this, who are really interested in what transpires here in Parliament.

Just as our country is made strong by our differences, Parliament is made strong by responsible and responsive differences, such as were not displayed during the last two weeks. Let us have responsible government and responsible opposition in Parliament. Perhaps long overdue reform will help all of us to be more responsible and responsive. Let me close, Mr. Speaker, by telling the story of an old farmer who frequently described his experience in life by saying, "Well, I'm not making much progress, but I'm established." One spring when he was hauling some logs, his wagon wheels sank down to the axles in mud. Try as he would he could not get the wagon out. Defeated, he sat atop the logs viewing the dismal situation. A neighbour who had always felt uncomfortable with the farmer's worn-out description of his life came along and said, "Well, brother Jones, I see you're not making much progress but you must be content because you're well established." We may be "established" in Parliament, Mr. Speaker, but if we are "stuck" we are not very productive.

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, in my initial remarks this evening I want to join with my colleagues in congratulating the hon. member for London West (Mr. Burghardt) on his maiden speech. When I was a student at the University of Western Ontario I was privileged to watch him on CFPL; I enjoyed watching him then, and I enjoyed it even more this evening. I think the contribution he made this evening, particularly as a new member who has not been in Parliament for a long period of time, was extremely constructive and very thoughtful, and it will be very helpful to each of us as we pursue the issue of parliamentary reform.