

these young people. That needs to be addressed. That is why we need to include responsibilities in the charter.

• (1815)

Another example is that the family needs to be the first line of defence, not the government, in providing care for members of society. I am referring to some of our social programs. Also parents should be responsible for child care. That primary responsibility should lie with them.

I would like to read something from the Swiss civil code. The Swiss have very low unemployment at around 2 per cent or 2.5 per cent. Much of it is due to the fact that they have a charter of responsibilities. I do not have time to explain all its ramifications but I will give an example of what they have.

Since 1978, Swiss law has compelled families to look after their needy before the government is asked to do so. Fathers, mothers, grandparents and others must support children. Governments sue grandparents on behalf of needy children and the elderly can sue their offspring for support. The Swiss courts collect the money.

Let me quote: "All persons are bound to contribute toward the maintenance of their ascendants and descendants in direct line as well as their brothers and sisters if without such assistance they were impoverished".

Let us think how different that is from the situation in Canada today where virtually no responsibility is placed on parents, grandparents or children for other members of their family. We need to emphasize the role families need to play in our society. We must once again generate the feeling of the importance of this basic unit in society, this basic economic unit, this basic cultural unit.

Parents should not only have the right to discipline but they should have the responsibility. The government would like to remove the right for parents to spank their children. Should we not be going in another direction and putting an emphasis on the responsibility of parents to do this kind of thing?

My colleague over there is unaware of what the government is doing. It would like the justice minister to remove the section in the Criminal Code that would allow parents to spank their children. If we did that, those parents who would choose that as a tool to discipline their children would no longer be able to do so. We are moving in the wrong direction with regard to a lot of legislation in the House.

We should be teaching our children in our schools what it means to be a good citizen of Canada. I noticed the Bloc objected very strongly to that and I can understand why. If that had happened we may not have had a group of people in the

### *Private Members' Business*

House today bent on breaking up the country. We need to emphasize that in our schools.

It has huge implications for immigration, for bringing in families and all of a sudden dumping those families on to the state. We should place more value on the family and the role it can play in society. Governments have been undermining the role of families.

In conclusion, we should make clear when people come to this great country that they have rights but they also have responsibilities. We need to send a signal to the people of Canada that government is not the primary caregiver. One of the best ways to do this is to change the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to include responsibilities.

**Mr. John Bryden (Hamilton—Wentworth):** Mr. Speaker, I cannot support the motion, although I see where it is coming from and I certainly agree that the charter as it exists has created a great amount of work for the courts, which has taken away from Parliament to some degree.

The motion as it stands confuses the principle of rights and freedoms with that of behaviour. When we say "responsibility" we are talking about how people should deport themselves as citizens. I submit that the motion would have made much more sense if it had suggested a charter of responsibilities for perhaps the Citizenship Act which is currently under review.

• (1820)

However even then I would find myself in difficulty supporting such a motion. One of the basic freedoms we have as Canadians is the freedom to do nothing. We have the freedom not to be strong, to be individuals who may be seen as weak. We are nevertheless individuals who deserve not to be penalized because we are less strong than others. That is the reason we need a charter that deals with the rights of individuals.

I had a great deal of difficulty during the recent hearings on the renewal of the Citizenship Act. I have to go back in time also to the Canada clause of the Charlottetown accord. In that particular latter instance a document purported to tell me as a Canadian whom and what I should respect. It said that I had to respect minorities, people because of gender, and people for various other reasons.

I submit that as a Canadian I do not have to be told things like that. As a Canadian and someone who would automatically know because of the way I have lived I would know that everyone in the country should be treated equally. I would think this is a fundamental matter.

When we talk about responsibilities we are beginning to impose our own rules of behaviour on other people. The hon. member opposite during his remarks cited, for example, that it should be the responsibility of every Canadian to report law-breakers, to inform the authorities whenever someone is deemed