

*The Address*

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** The member for Richelieu is raising a point that the translation was not working, so I will give the floor back to the member for Brant.

**Mrs. Stewart (Brant):** Mr. Speaker, what I would like to say to the hon. member is that her suggestions are very good. I think some of them are not necessarily new. Perhaps they felt out in the wilderness in the west because they have not been represented by Liberals in the very recent and in the long term.

• (1515)

**Mrs. Ablonczy:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the kind remarks of the hon. member for Brant whom I have met and hope to get to know better. Her remarks underscore the fact that there is a genuine and possibly unprecedented desire in Parliament for new directions and for doing things differently. Members are very much determined to consult their constituents and to represent them truly.

That is the point at which we have some question marks, or at least I do as a new member. It is all very well to consult with constituents, talk to them, to have meetings and to hear what they have to say. However if we come back here and we are told how to vote, what is the point? Their input does not mean anything.

When our constituents tell us they want us to represent them and voice their desires and concerns because they are paying us to do so since they cannot be here, we have to be free to do that. We cannot have our parties telling us: "You cannot vote that way. We have decided to do something different".

That is the reform we must have in the House and that is what we are going to keep working for. We have to support that together. If not just our particular caucus but all members have the drive and determination to achieve that, it will turn this House upside down and make it truly a House of the people which it was meant to be.

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** There is one minute remaining in the five minute question and comment period. I will allow one short question and, hopefully, the answer will be equally short.

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to congratulate and thank my hon. colleague from Calgary North for her speech. Listening to our colleagues from the Reform Party, I note an underlying concern having to do with members gaining the ability to make a greater contribution as well as reducing government spending and generally putting government finances in order. We must, I think, salute the sense of initiative and determination of the Reform Party in that area.

However, I am somewhat surprised to hear them go on and on about the need to put government finances in order, after having heard yesterday the hon. member for Calgary Southwest blame the Bloc Quebecois for bringing up the constitutional issue a number of times in this place. The speakers who spoke after him asked questions dealing with various issues, like free votes, free trade—which reflected the obsessive fear you can often find in English Canada on that subject—and self-government, but very few questions relating specifically to government finances and fiscal consolidation.

Of course, I would like to press on with this issue. So much so that I will ask my hon. colleague from Calgary North if the Reform Party would consider supporting the proposal the Bloc Quebecois put forward several weeks or months ago to strike a special committee to examine, item by item, all the tax and budget expenditures of the federal government.

I would be interested in hearing what my colleague from Calgary North has to say on that. This would allow us, in fact, to know better where to make cuts, so that social programs and those intended to provide assistance to the poor would not be such easy targets.

Can our hon. colleagues from the Reform Party tell us whether or not it would be possible to set up a parliamentary committee to go over all government tax and budget expenditures, item by item?

[English]

**Mrs. Ablonczy:** Mr. Speaker, that does not sound like a set up for a one-minute answer.

In answer to my colleague's question I would say that Reform certainly would be very open to anything that could help the government get its spending under control. I believe many people in Quebec voted against the past government very much because they rejected the fiscal policies and mismanagement that have practically ruined not only the province of Quebec but our entire country.

We have to get a grip on that. I think as members we have a mandate to do that. Our people want us to do that. We would be very happy to co-operate with and support anything that would assist in doing that.

• (1520)

On what we would cut back, I would commend to my colleague a study of the program we put forward during the election called our zero and three plan to balance the federal budget over a three-year period of Parliament. It would be interesting for the member to know—and a lot of people do not know it—that our plan balances the federal budget while preserving funding for important social programs like health care, education and pensions for people who need pensions.