

The Address—Mr. Cossitt

presentations. Each minister simply dispenses with a free hand this insidious government largesse to those the Liberal Party wishes to reward for previous services rendered or for future favours anticipated. Recently there have been press comments on this subject by such notables as Senator Davey, the author of such questionable political gems in the past as the infamous "truth squad" and the man who the Prime Minister has now brought back from Limbo to see if there is anything left in his little bag of tricks that will keep a sinking ship afloat. The senator and his associates have described some details of the eight-man committee that will handle Liberal Party advertising in the next election campaign. Supposedly by sheer coincidence it happens to be composed of top officials from four advertising agencies which, in turn again by sheer coincidence of course, just happen to be agencies that have somehow received fat government contracts. This is nothing more than scandalous and degrading use of government advertising contracts as a political pay-off to those who will attempt to keep the government in power, presumably with some anticipation of their firms receiving another ride on the gravy train.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that this is not only a deplorable situation but also could be construed as an attempt to get around the limitation on expenses imposed by the new Election Expenses Act. In other words, these eight men, described by the former executive assistant to the Minister of Finance in a rare moment of political candor as "our type of people", will presumably come to the aid of the Liberal Party more or less free of charge and any subsequent fat advertising contracts that might be awarded to their firms by a Liberal government would be absolutely coincidental. Without a doubt, Mr. Speaker, the present system of awarding government advertising contract on the basis of ministerial prerogative is about the worst example that exists of a government doling out political party patronage from public funds. It is essential that steps be taken to remove millions of dollars of government advertising contracts from their present status of nothing more than political slush funds.

I would like to say a few words about the government's sacred cow, namely its methods of instituting bilingualism—and I refer particularly to the methods of institution—in the public service which it has sought to wrap in an aura of untouchableness. It has attempted to create an atmosphere in which it is immediately considered sacrilege for anyone to offer legitimate, justifiable or constructive criticism on the subject. In reality, the bilingual program and the methods of implementing it should be fully and most carefully scrutinized, in the same manner as any other government action. This sacred cow should no longer be viewed through rose-coloured glasses but instead should be completely examined in every detail for the purpose of eliminating its nonsensical aspects and at the same time assuring fair treatment to all person employed in the public service. As a start, I would suggest that Canadians are entitled to a much better performance than they have been getting on this subject from both the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury) and the gadfly flitting around of official languages commissioner Keith Spicer of Westmount Rhodesian fame.

[Mr. Cossitt.]

● (1600)

It seems to me also that we could do without cocktail circuit bilingualism, as evidenced by the spending of some thousands of dollars to give language lessons to wives of senior public servants in an unwarranted abuse of public funds. Why should the taxpayers pay for language lessons taken by the wife of the governor of the Bank of Canada who makes \$75,000 a year, and why should the taxpayers of Canada be paying for language lessons taken by the wife of the president of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation who has been quoted in the press as saying she took language lessons so that she could get along better in French at cocktail parties? Already \$85,000 are reported to have been spent on this particular nonsensical aspect of the implementation of bilingualism, and I suggest it should be stopped forthwith. I believe that the implementation of bilingualism in this country, the methods being used by this government, has become a mismanaged monstrosity manipulated for political purposes and that a thorough examination is certainly warranted.

In conclusion, and with regret, I must say that I have found in my constituency, and places elsewhere as well, disillusionment with Canada as it is today. There is a feeling, which I believe is justified, that this country is drifting in a sea of economic and social confusion because there is not a firm hand at the rudder prepared to deal with our problems. Surely, it is time that the interests and problems of Canada and its people were attended to. Surely, it is time for an end to government by emperor complex, for an end to government that classifies democratic opposition as nothing more than nobodies. Indeed, it is time for an end to a government that wants to hold office, not for the prime purpose of doing good things for ordinary people but for the sake of clutching power in the palm of its hand. Canada needs a government that is prepared to come to grips with our social and economic problems. Canadians deserve a government that will fight the cost of living with something more than the inaction and the empty words of recent years.

Mr. Paul E. McRae (Fort William): Mr. Speaker, I should like, first, to extend my congratulations to our new Governor General and wish him the very best in this most arduous post. I should also like to congratulate the mover and seconder of the Speech from the Throne. Their efforts reflect the great contribution that has been made in this House by the younger, newly elected members, and also the growing concern of the whole House about the poverty which exists in Canada and throughout the world.

In reflecting, after one year in the House, the thing that stands out in my mind is the essential fragility of Canada as a country. We see the great problems with the two languages and the multicultural problems. We see problems in the poor and welfare areas of the country. We see problems between the developed and the undeveloped areas, and we see problems between the provinces and the federal government which result in clashes between them.

Mr. Neil: And nothing is being done about it.

Mr. McRae: A lot is being done about it and I will come to that in a moment. I see Canada as an essential core with