

want to have freedom of speech? We all wish it, and we have problems with the present system. Otherwise, we are forced to take part in so-called political games and, Madam Speaker, the public has had enough of this.

I have not accepted this, Madam Speaker, and neither have certain other members. We are often embarrassed by a system which has remained unchanged, by traditions that we do not want to lose, by what has become a daily practice. This is unfortunate because we are losing the confidence of the population, who wonders why Parliament is not more effective and loses so much time discussing certain pieces of legislation. It is not the rules that should be changed, but the attitudes of men and women. I hope that this session will see a much more objective Parliament that will stop fooling the population of Canada by accepting that this is our system and that we must keep it just as it is.

I believe that whatever legislation is brought forward in this House, it will be effective only if the attitudes and the mentality of those who make up this Parliament truly change. By accepting our well-defined roles, in other words, the freedom that we need, we shall stop leaving it to our poor people who have been waiting for so long and often die of suffering because the government or Parliament behaved too often more like politicians than businessmen.

Madam Speaker, if we take seriously our legislative duties and treat individuals with the respect they deserve, we shall behave quite differently and pass legislation which will benefit our people for many years to come. We must examine the possibility of granting the old age security pension at an earlier age. I am aware that, during the past election campaign, the Prime Minister did not reject the possibility of granting the old age security pension at age 63 or 64, whether on a conditional basis or not. We can easily imagine the happy results that such a policy would yield. It would then be less urgent to put such a measure into effect. It is unfortunate, Madam Speaker, but we must give a well-earned rest to those people and find work for the young who are disheartened by unemployment.

Furthermore, I wish to request from the Minister of National Health and Welfare special and additional funds for the New Horizons Program. This is a marvelous experiment. I had a chance to meet with many groups of persons asking for grants, and rightly so. I do not think there is any better social measure than that announced by the government a few years ago, but there is a problem, that is a lack of funds. I wonder if it will be possible this year to double the funds to meet the needs of all those senior citizens' clubs requesting a small grant to acquire the means and facilities they need so that elderly people may meet and enjoy life for a long time.

So, Madam Speaker, I think the minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde) should seriously consider the feasibility of granting additional funds.

I would like also to deal with the difficult situation in which the farmers are, and which is due to the lack of proper action from the government over the last few years. Of course, we will have again the opportunity to discuss those problems on many occasions. But I wonder, Madam Speaker, if the hon. minister presently in the House will do something. I think he is aware of the agricultural

The Address—Mr. MacEachen

problems and that he is not lacking good will in respect of the farming group. But I dare ask for his particular attention, keeping in mind the current state of stagnation in which farming is in Canada, and this in every area. I wonder to what extent there are some measures with a view to not only upholding but also upgrading farming. Lacking funds is of course a major problem, but to what extent should we consider the importance of stabilizing again that sector of activity which produces so many things across the country?

And if we do not tackle shortly the job of providing farmers with sufficient income, we shall repent dearly. I believe city dwellers should understand better than they did up to now how important adequate revenues are to the farmers. I therefore ask the minister to increase at the earliest possible date subsidies to milk producers, and to understand the importance of indexing prices to production costs. It may not be the best thing long-term wise, I agree, but we can no longer delay giving these producers adequate returns if we are to prove that we care about agriculture's problems. In so doing, we will be meeting the interests of all Canadian consumers.

Madam Speaker, I ask in conclusion that all members give some thought not only to the proposed changes in the standing orders, but to changing their own attitudes. How can we make government much more efficient, interesting and productive for society? With a little self-restraint, leaving partisanship to country hustings in areas where no problems exist but which have a lot of room for party bickering. We must first and above all care for the interests of the people who have long been awaiting action from their elected representatives. In this way we would much more deservedly carry on from our predecessors.

[*English*]

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, I must congratulate you on presiding over our deliberations this afternoon with such charm and competence. I also wish to mention the election of our new Speaker, the hon. member for Sudbury (Mr. Jerome). We have no doubt about his ability to make an outstanding contribution to the work of the House of Commons. His intimate knowledge of the House itself and of its committees system will stand him in good stead in the work of guiding the chamber. The mover and the seconder of the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne deserve our gratitude for reminding us once again that good preparation is still one of the essential elements of successful speechmaking in the House of Commons.

The President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp), who is at once my successor and my predecessor, set an excellent tone in his speech last Friday when asking us to consider ways and means of making the House of Commons more responsive to the growing demands on its time and energies. I wish him well in his exacting new responsibilities as I pay tribute to his many great achievements in the portfolio which I have the honour presently to hold.

I cannot look back upon the twenty-ninth parliament without a touch of nostalgia. A majority government is sensible, but a minority parliament is undoubtedly livelier. In fact, the past two years have been among the most interesting and action-filled in Canada's political history. The success of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) in