

Liberals are resorting to ad hoc political expediency and, I fear, may end up paying lip service to, and watering down the whole idea of, a super ministry on social development in terms of what its mandate should be.

I fully support the program description as it is outlined in the blue book estimates of 1980-81 in section 27, page 4. This section, under the heading "Policy Formulation, Program Review and Assessment", says that the new ministry shall:

Develop approaches to improve and integrate the delivery of social benefits to Canadians and lead and co-ordinate the efforts of the Government of Canada to foster co-operative arrangements with the provinces and with public and private organizations to facilitate the development of the individual, the family and the community.

I could not agree more with the principles expressed in that intention and that mandate.

An hon. Member: It sounds good.

Mr. Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): Yes, it sounds very good, but let us see what happens to it. I also feel strongly that part of this ministry's mandate is to get rid of the bureaucracy that is involved in some of the social portfolios and get rid of the duplication of services as between federal governments and provincial governments. In this sense, I believe that this ministry must really have a constitutional consciousness.

This was the thoughtful way in which we were approaching the setting up of a super ministry of this sort. We were always working for gross in our economic and social programs as expressed in the gross national product, but I am afraid, based on past experience, that the Liberals will regard this ministry as gross, as in the size of the bureaucracy.

When we refer to the bureaucracy, it is most often in a negative sense. I do not think that should be the case. I know well from my reporting years around here and as a member of government that one can feel the capacity for work in the civil service. There is a very real conscientious care for Canada on the part of bureaucrats who can be, and in many cases are, the nicest, most mild-mannered people in the world. They are not vicious, ill-tempered types out to rob the taxpayers blind; they are following the rules.

But these hard working, well meaning civil servants get caught in the vastness of the machine. As soon as a new ministry is hatched—and one sometimes must wonder about the kind of boondoggling and patronage that follows the birth of new department—automatically the talk is about a budget of \$8 million to \$10 million in today's terms. Human nature being what it is, especially in the public service, any new department must have some status. That is measured in human relation terms by the size of the budget and the number of people in the new department, ministry or agency.

A Consumers Association of Canada survey of 900 of its members, which was released just last night, reveals that their greatest fear about inflation is the rise in the federal deficit. So yet another bureaucracy will come as cold comfort to consumers. Knowing how Liberal governments work, I am very concerned that this new ministry signals the creation of a vast bureaucracy and will grow like crab grass on the lawn.

Social Development Ministry

Let me give hon. members a personal glimpse at the industry I have been a part of for a quarter of a century to illustrate the suffocating effects of government becoming an increasingly vast, amorphous empire. What has happened to the broadcasting industry is that it has been snowed under and smothered by paperwork and slide-rule regulations. Independent broadcasters or family-owned operations found they were not broadcasters at all. They spent all their time reporting to government, filling out forms and appearing before public hearings. They became fed up trying to satisfy the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, and all its predecessors, that form XA-B2-4(1), subsection iii, and similar documents which broadcasters are required to fill out every week, was impossible to keep up with. Many individual broadcast operators I know simply sold out to the larger broadcasting chains.

The effect of a bureaucracy trying to justify its existence is to sap individuals, and eventually their communities, of their spirit. For example, a broadcaster's mandate is to stay in touch with his or her community, and the listening audience with the broadcaster. By knowing what his community wants, needs, feels, the broadcaster can do what she or he was trained to do—be creative, come up with experimental ideas, some of which work, many of which do not; but often a good idea leads to being solidly competitive.

It is an illustration of how ideas from the arts and cultural communities can come from the bottom, not be imposed from the top. No government committee or tribunal could have told Shakespeare "Write some great plays, Will Baby!" Broadcasters—including many of the people involved in the technical end—just do not have time to complete the idiotic paperwork and attend public hearings justifying their existence, and at the same time serve their communities by exercising their ingenuity and imagination. So they give up or sell out to those who can afford bookkeepers.

I have a very real fear that the proposed super ministry could result in the same sort of suffocation of individual spirit, initiative and privacy. I worry about the cross-indexing power that a central ministry of this size could have. They will end up with our OHIP numbers, they will have our SIN numbers, they have our OAS numbers, and they will have our driver's licence numbers. I feel that a ministry of this size, improperly used, could mean the end of legitimate privacy.

In view of what this social development ministry is supposed to be doing, it raises a very interesting question as to the relationship of the new minister of social development to the rest of his cabinet colleagues. I dare say, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member for Saint-Maurice (Mr. Chrétien) stands to become the second most powerful man in the country, exceeded only by the power of the bureaucrats who run this social development ministry.

Let me try to illustrate the amorphous nature of this super-duty ministry in terms of the family. I have been wondering for the past few weeks just who over there on the government front benches is responsible for the family unit. There is where the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ouel-