

*The Address—Mr. Lapierre*

or of those who promoted the idea, because what we want to avoid above all is to lock this segment of the population into some kind of ghetto.

I strongly believe the most noble objective we could assign to this initiative would be to achieve full integration of the youth into our society. The top priority of the hundreds of groups we have met is employment. To have a job is certainly the best standard of social integration. Several young people told us: Do not try to come up with a miracle cure, a panacea. Neither do we want to be considered solely as cheap labour. What they expect from the jobs we create for them is to help them get direct and, hopefully, permanent integration in the labour force.

I am happy to see that, recently, our job creation programs, such as NEED and Canada Works, have for the first time been providing for participation by the private sector. If we go by what has happened in my own constituency, many projects that were developed by the private sector have created what were to be short term jobs, but as these young people proved to be useful to the businesses and favourably impressed their bosses, they were then able to get permanent jobs. In fact, certain projects were maintained indefinitely. I therefore hope that the majority of the new initiatives developed by the Ministry of Youth will aim at long term integration in the work force and not simply at creating short term jobs. If such is the case and with the co-operation of the private sector, I believe that these programs have very great potential.

Of course, there are also cultural, linguistic, financial and geographic obstacles to the participation of young people. However, Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that, if we have a comprehensive idea of the situation of our young Canadians, we can try to minimize these barriers. Once more, the International Youth Year will give us the opportunity to examine the most difficult obstacles standing in the way of young Canadians and the realignments that should be made in our own policies. In this regard, I believe that the great majority of young Canadians have rather high expectations of their International Year as they have seen what progress can be made following the International Woman's Year, the International Year of the Child and so on.

One of the problems which was often raised during our discussions and to which the Minister will certainly give her attention is the need for young people to organize, to join together so that they can express their views. The weakness of any youth organization is often due to a lack of funds. Most of these organizations live from day to day relying on Government projects and sporadic grants and unfortunately do not have any medium or long term financial standing. Yet, other organizations, whether they represent economic interests such as the Chambers of Commerce or women's groups, have shown that they can get from the government long term funding commitments to ensure their survival. And to that extent, I am convinced that it would be essential to set up a program to

insure the continued existence of organizations dedicated to young people.

There is so much diversity among young people, Mr. Speaker, that there is a great need for them to meet and talk and try to agree on priorities. In this regard, the event which took place in Quebec last year, that is a Quebec summit for youth sets an example and I hope we will see more of those summits. It brought about a deeper public awareness, helped young people to reach a consensus and draw up some rough plans. I know that at present, many volunteers throughout Canada are nursing various ideas. I know for example that during the weekend 150 young people representing various organizations will be meeting in New Brunswick to put their heads together and perhaps eventually organize a summit. I think that such initiatives should be encouraged.

If we want to have a dynamic community, we must make sure that all sectors in that community can state their views and take part in the development of our common project.

Another finding which will surely be a great challenge is to restore somewhat the confidence of the young people in our institutions, whether it be this House, unions or big business. The Bishops' Conference stated that many of those young people see themselves as part of a lost generation. They are under the impression that unions shut them out with their seniority rights. Undeniably, this House also has seniority requirements which prevent them from gaining access to the decision-making level. The young are surely not heard as easily as the Board of Trade. That is why it will be necessary to make sure that Members on all sides of this House are more familiar with their grievances. I know that the Canadian Federation of Students comes here each year to make their problems known to Members of Parliament. And this year, I must point out, the students were quite pleased with the welcome they were given by most Members of Parliament.

But I think more of those groups will have to organize to do some real lobbying if they wish to be heard.

Another problem of course is lack of access to government information. In that sense, I know this is a real challenge to all departments, but the ministry of State for Youth has a target population, and I hope that new programs can be developed that have imagination but also much simplicity to avoid that famous red tape that often turns people off.

Another complaint, and in fact another interest of our young was of course a better knowledge of the country and the world, and in that sense the initiative announced in the Throne Speech concerning the VIA pass certainly is welcome and had indeed been suggested by many groups.

I know the Canadian International Development Agency also fosters knowledge of the world, but it is my hope that it can in the future give wider access to those programs, because I know there is a very strong demand.