

Commonwealth Caribbean

member of parliament I have had the opportunity of going to Quebec.

The hon. member spoke of a list of priorities. I should like to refer to some that have not done too well. In the *Ottawa Journal* of May 27, 1978, under the headline "Student Exchange Program Goes Broke", there appeared the following report:

The federal government's showcase student exchange program, Open House Canada, has run out of money with 6,000 on the waiting list.

Co-ordinator Brian Gilhuly said the program's budget of \$6 ½ million is enough to take care of 23,500 students. Another 6,000 students have completed the necessary steps and are waiting to be accepted.

Open House Canada offered free airfare to anyone between the ages of 14 and 22 who was willing to be matched up with a host somewhere else in Canada.

Apparently we do not have enough money for these student exchanges. I see the hon. member for Hillsborough is having a chat with a member from British Columbia who is a colleague of mine. I am sure my colleague on that side of the House will add his persuasions to mine.

I do not want to oppose the program for the Caribbean, Mr. Speaker, but it is low on my list of priorities. It is a good idea and I, too, want exchanges with the Caribbean, but also with France, England, and other places. The hon. member, of course, has his list of priorities, but during the 20 minutes that he spoke he never once mentioned any other part of Canada. Has he forgotten British Columbia, Alberta, and other parts of the country? They are all rather beautiful, but it costs the average Canadian too much to visit them.

I should like to hear the hon. member's views on lower airfares. I am sure there are people in his riding who would like to see Quebec and Ontario.

I should like to tell the House of the value of the student exchanges, Mr. Speaker. In British Columbia there is some prejudice against Toronto and Ontario, perhaps even more than in the maritimes. Certainly there is some prejudice against Quebec and against another language. From time to time to it has been my pleasure—as I know it has been for other members—to welcome students from all parts of the country who are participating in programs such as Open House Canada. They have all thought how wonderful it was to have the opportunity to participate.

Three years ago I attended Laval University in Quebec—at my own expense—in order to learn French. I met with students from the United States, British Columbia, and even from Prince Edward Island. All saw Quebec city and the province firsthand as they were learning the language, and they had no prejudices or misconceptions. If both students and adults had the opportunity to travel across the country and still had a dislike of one part of the country, at least it would be well founded on things they had experienced, and not based on misconceptions. Some of those misconceptions are due to the failure of the media, and of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in particular to live up to its mandate of explaining one part of the country to other parts.

[Mr. Raines.]

● (1622)

I have called for cuts in the CBC. I have called for these cuts in committee, and I have done so in opposition to this government at times. I have called for cuts in administration, but I have told the CBC president, Al Johnson, in committee that I would even vote for an increase because I think communication is that important. If the CBC would live up to its mandate, nothing could be more important.

Of equal importance to communications is the right of Canadians at this time in our history to travel and see the country and to meet their friends and fellow Canadians from Quebec, Ontario, and Prince Edward Island. And now, in December, 1978, to have a colleague of mine say—and I call him a colleague whether he is on this side of the House or the other side of the House, our ideas could be the same—let us have exchanges with the Caribbean, valuable although that may be, I find it almost to the point of being discourteous that in a 20-minute speech he did not mention once that we have a need in British Columbia and Alberta that is not being fulfilled.

The airfare from Ottawa to Vancouver and return costs \$430, and that is not an easy amount to find. So I suppose people from here go to Florida and the Caribbean. I do not blame them. People who live in British Columbia, because of the excessive cost of air fare and the lack of communication—we do not see that on the national network—people in British Columbia are more familiar with Seattle, Hawaii and California than they are with the maritime provinces. This national disgrace must come to an end sooner or later. That is why for four and a half years I have asked that the constituents who live in the Hillsborough riding, as well as all the people who come from Ontario, Quebec, or any part of eastern Canada, be given an opportunity to come to British Columbia, Alberta or any part of the west. By the same token I want the people of the west to have the opportunity to come east.

While I am not telling anyone what language they can or cannot speak, there are growing numbers of people in British Columbia who want the opportunity to learn another language. I submit that we should all join together to give them the opportunity to learn a second language. I do not care what the media or what orators in this House say, and at times I do not care what this government says, because I have been to Quebec, I have spoken to the people there and I have found a desire to learn English. I find their hearts are good.

No matter what premiers or officials of any province may say, I have talked to the people, as have all hon. members—the hon. member from Prince Edward Island has talked to people more than I in his long and distinguished career—and I think the people of Canada are good, and that growing segment who want an opportunity to become Canadians must be given that opportunity. For that reason perhaps the hon. member for Hillsborough will join me in my plea that we have a chance to see all sections of this country and then, after that, perhaps I will be prepared to listen somewhat more carefully to an exchange between the maritimes and the Caribbean.