

*The Address—Mr. La Salle*

ing the position we have to take. The system commits our conscience and I do not think this can be overstated.

On both sides of the House there has been some position statements which were embarrassing for the government members as well as for the opposition. I have had great problems in this area. Then as I still have a desire to serve society and the community that place confidence in me I wish to say, as this session begins, that I intend to maintain my freedom of speech keeping in mind the interest of society. Who could blame me for it, Madam Speaker? And I know that it is the desire of every member of Parliament, but because of the system, of the circumstances and a few other reasons, we often find it embarrassing.

We have the obligation to fulfill our commitments. As members of Parliament, and I think of the new members, we also have some aims. Those new members have the intention and the willingness to cooperate in the structuration of a more valuable society. I understand then. There are also the election promises, the commitments made during an election campaign. I, for one, was not afraid to say in my constituency that, if we had to form a government, as it could have happened, we should not hesitate to guarantee milk producers the \$10.13 recommended since January 1, 1974. Furthermore, we promised to give the old age security pension gradually, at the age of 60.

If we had formed the government, through an agreement reached by the majority in caucus, I could have been told: You know, since we are in power, it is not so urgent; it would be better to introduce these measures before another election. As several commitments of the government will be carried out only before a new election, I would never have accepted a delay in keeping our commitments, in adopting measures which are so urgent. This is why it is so important to remind hon. members of their prime responsibility in this House, a responsibility which is mine as well and I would like it to be shared by all the members of the government who should soon be accountable for the promises they made during the last election campaign.

Unfortunately and rudely in certain cases, dishonesty is publicly shown every day, because it is customary and usual to believe that only a few individuals are involved and in reference to the government, that the cabinet has the jurisdiction and knows the truth and for some reasons that we all know, the members are compelled to give in because it is always dangerous and unfortunate to experience a possible setback when one does not comply with a decision taken by the cabinet.

We have in our party as in others some discussions which following a majority vote must define the policy of our political party in this House. However, this does not prevent us, and you will admit it, Madam Speaker, from upholding regional interests and fulfilling some personal undertakings as, I believe, many members have taken during the election campaign.

Convinced that the best evidence is examples, I could ask why the government refrains from giving a \$500 grant to any new owner. The promise was made, I believe, on June 22. I will not ask the Prime Minister to make it retroactive to June 22, but I sincerely think that he was canvassing for votes when he made that promise. A number of my constituents spoke to me about it. I did not

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hesitate to say that I would support such a measure, but several were tempted to support the present government because for them a \$500 grant for the construction of a new house was quite attractive.

Why does this government not undertake immediately at least to make it retroactive to the 8th of July? The Prime Minister was saying then that if he formed the government he would apply that measure. But when? In a year, six months? There are indeed thousands of new owners who will be deprived and fail to receive that subsidy, and perhaps the majority of them voted for the government. That might be involuntary dishonesty, but I do not think so. The Prime Minister is too intelligent, for that, Madam Speaker.

However, I blame the government for not responding. I think the majority of Liberal members would be quiet happy to give a subsidy of \$500, retroactive to July 8 last, to those new owners. That is what I call equity but we do not have that.

Why did this government not hear the government of Quebec on several points? With indeed a sizeable Quebec representation why in the field of immigration, for example, did the Quebec minister not lend an attentive ear to the federal government? Why are we having so many difficulties in the field of communication in Quebec with a team including so many Quebecers? I think the hon. member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert) openly supported the claim of \$360 million made by Mr. Choquette with respect to protective services. How is it he was the only one to do so?

I do not hesitate to support the request made by Mr. Choquette in that respect. I know many Quebecers are tempted to support the request made by Mr. Choquette and the Quebec government. But because of a system and to respect a party line that province which gave such serious support to this government is betrayed everyday. I regret that attitude, Madam Speaker. I will shun today from blaming this government for its attitude but during this session I will come back on those questions.

So a formula should be found which would allow every member to vindicate in full freedom the interests of those who elected him, and to define more clearly perhaps the vote of confidence given to the government. Would it be sacrilegious, Madam Speaker, for the hon. members to be free to vote for one piece of legislation and to support another one which does not meet the needs of a region like mine or like one of another hon. member?

If such legislation is defeated in the House, why not require a confidence vote immediately? It is possible that an hon. member, even on the government side, is against a measure brought in by his government. But this does not mean that the hon. member has lost his party's or his government's confidence.

● (1540)

Because of completely regional commitments and interests, we may even be forced to vote against a bill. But this does not mean that we condemn our own party or that this party has lost confidence in its government. If we could define this fact by a formula, that others better qualified than myself could devise, we could perhaps give freedom of speech to the members of this House. Who does not