

comparable. In other words, the fiscal efforts being made in those provinces are much greater than those being made in other provinces. In Alberta, which has substantial problems, there is no sales tax at all.

I remind Members of the House of the Constitution which was passed in 1981 and came into force a year later. Section 34(2) reads:

Parliament and the Government of Canada are committed to the principle of making equalization payments to ensure that provincial governments have sufficient revenues to provide reasonably comparable levels of public services at reasonably comparable levels of taxation.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, as the Quebec Minister of Finance just wrote to the Minister of Finance of Canada, here in the House, that is no longer the case for Quebec or any of the other provinces that are disadvantaged. And in fact, as Mr. Lévesque said in his letter, Quebec cannot afford a level of public services reasonably comparable to that of the other provinces unless it places a tax burden on its taxpayers that is far heavier than the average level of taxation in Canada, or else goes deeper into debt.

Mr. Speaker, the Quebec Minister of Finance believes that Quebec will owe \$1.4 billion more in 1985-86 under the existing equalization formula. It is a fact that the existing formula which the Minister of Finance of Canada wants to maintain does not live up to the solemn commitment contained in the Canadian Constitution. These are the facts. We are creating two classes of provinces in Canada, the wealthy provinces and the others, those which receive equalization payments and cannot provide substantially the same level of Government services because of the weaknesses of the existing equalization system.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to make specific comments on the bill, but generally speaking, the Government has forgotten the commitment made by the Conservatives during the 1984 electoral campaign to work for national reconciliation. They are no longer working to reach this goal and this is a serious mistake. It shows a marked lack of concern.

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[*English*]

PETITIONS

OPPOSITION TO EXODUS LINK CONTRACT

Mr. Andrew Witer (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to present to the House today 19 petitions bearing the signatures of over 1,000 Toronto residents stating their opposition to the Exodus Link parole privatization contract which would locate dangerous ex-convicts in Parkdale—High Park. The petition calls for the Solicitor General

Fiscal Arrangements Act

(Mr. Kelleher) to terminate immediately funding to Exodus Link until an alternative location outside the boundaries of Parkdale—High Park has been found. I want to add my full and complete support to their petition.

OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED CHANGES TO PATENT ACT

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present several petitions signed by residents of Winnipeg and some towns in Manitoba. The petitioners suggest that the Government's proposal to change the Patent Act relating to prescription drugs will increase drug prices for Canadian consumers and will severely restrict the ability of average Canadians to buy necessary prescription drugs. They feel that the proposed measure will unfairly hurt those Canadians whose health needs require the purchase of prescription drugs on an ongoing basis. They, therefore, humbly pray and call upon Parliament to reject these proposals which will increase prescription drug prices for Canadians.

● (1540)

OPPOSITION TO ESTABLISHMENT OF MILITARY BASE

Mr. Gordon Taylor (Bow River): Mr. Speaker, I have great pleasure in presenting this petition on behalf of 155 Canadians, most of whom live in Alberta. Wherefore the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon Parliament to restrict the Department of National Defence from using, utilizing, purchasing, leasing, or in any way establishing a military base on the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains of Alberta, and in particular the Highwood River Valley area abutting the Kananaskis Provincial Park. This is the three hundred and forty-first petition that has been presented and there are scores more on the way. A certificate is attached.

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FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL FISCAL ARRANGEMENTS AND FEDERAL POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND HEALTH CONTRIBUTIONS ACT, 1977

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-44, an Act to amend the Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements and Federal-Post-Secondary Education and Health Contributions Act.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Shall the Hon. Minister have leave to introduce the Bill?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, Bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.