We will continue to reform the Criminal Code so that it accurately reflects the importance that Canadians attach to such as respect for the law and the protection of innocent citizens. I strongly believe, as do the overwhelming majority of the 6000 households in Willowdale that I personally canvassed this summer, that capital punishment is one item that should be brought forth and debated in the House. Protecting Canadians against all forms of criminal violence is a main priority of the Government.

We acted quickly when the Bill on mandatory supervision was stalled in the Senate and held a very rare summer sitting of the House to resolve the impasse. This shows our resolve and determination.

For too long, our immigration system has been abused. This was not the case when I came to Canada with my father, mother and 12 brothers and sisters. We patiently waited in line until our turn. While we may have wanted to proceed faster at times, it was impossible. Complex, ineffective legislation enacted in the mid-1970s has allowed our immigration system to become abused. We have been making major strides in correcting this situation. We have simplified and improved the present refugee determination system. Entry procedures will be streamlined and a case-by-case administrative review was begun in July in order to clear Immigration Canada's backlog of some 20,000 claims.

• (1600)

Our legislation has been firm and fair and still maintains our humanitarian reputation in immigration matters. Our Government has increased immigration for the first time since 1980-81. It had slowly dropped to about the 80,000 level but this year it has gone up to 115,000 and hopefully next year it will be increased to 130,000. I am also pleased that the Speech from the Throne made mention of the fact that we are going to make improvements to the illiteracy rate in Canada. Last week I met with the board and staff of the North York Library to discuss this very point. I am very pleased that that problem was mentioned in the Speech from the Throne.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize the very strong leadership provided by our Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney). Under his direction, Canada is once again becoming a very strong economic power. No one can deny Canada's economic performance under his leadership. Our Prime Minister has brought harmony to federal-provincial relations, and his vision of a strong, prosperous and united Canada is being brought to fruition. I am proud to be a Progressive Conservative. I am proud to be led by Prime Minister Mulroney, and I am proud of the very deep and dignified speech he gave in this House this afternoon. He will be remembered as the Canadian leader who turned this country around, as a Prime Minister with the courage to lead.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order. I think I should bring to the attention of Hon. Members that we will abide by that one rule of not using the names of the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) or the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner). They should be referred to as the Prime Minister, the Right Hon. Prime Minister, the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition, and the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent). I would like to recognize the Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap (Mr. Riis) and then the Hon. Member for Nanaimo-Alberni (Mr. Schellenberg) for questions or comments.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your intervention in drawing to our attention the fact that we are not to refer to our colleagues by their names but by their constituencies or titles.

I appreciated with interest the comments made by my hon. friend. He mentioned the whole matter of the Government's commitment to tax reform. I want to ask the Hon. Member for his views on four items of importance in comprehensive tax reform. Would he give us his view on whether or not we should retain the $500,000 capital gains exemption? I do not think any other country in the world has this. Does he think that ought to be maintained? Second, I would like his personal views as to the fact that there are now in excess of 79,000 companies in Canada in a profitable position which paid no income tax at all. In fact, many of those companies have profits in the $100 million, $200 million, $300 million range, so we are not talking necessarily about small corporations at the moment but about some of the giants of Canada, some of which one can find listed in the top brackets of the large 500 corporations of Canada.

I would also like to have the Hon. Member's view of the fact that the tax revenue the federal Government now collects, has over the years shifted so that now virtually 82 per cent of all tax revenue is derived from personal taxes and only 18 per cent from corporate taxes. Just a few years ago this was in fact split 50-50. Now it is split 82-18. Fourth, I would like to know whether the Hon. Member is a supporter of the introduction of the business transfer tax or, as I call it, a fancy name for a value-added tax or a sophisticated sales tax?

Mr. Oostrom: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member asked my views on the capital gains tax. Naturally, the capital gains tax as well as other measures will certainly be under review at the time the review takes place. We have instituted the $500,000 capital gains exemption, and the result has been 600,000 new jobs created in Canada. I think that is quite a performance. I am not sure whether this tax will continue. If we can create another 600,000 jobs in the future, by all means it should be continued. I would rather have Canadians working and contributing than have the high unemployment rates we have experienced in the past.

The second point was with respect to loopholes. As the Hon. Member may remember, during the past two years we have closed a number of loopholes in our tax system. Perhaps we have not closed them all. We would welcome the Hon. Member bringing these to our attention, perhaps in the Committee on Finance or to the attention of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson), so that we can close these loopholes because I do not believe anyone should be able to evade due taxes.