

Corporations and Labour Unions

acknowledged that fact. The Parliamentary Secretary did so in his speech, and so did I a few moments ago. It is reassuring to know that part of the Act referring to the mandate of CALURA will not be affected by the new Bill in question.

We must recognize that there has been very little demand from policy Departments for the confidential data. That was part of the existing legislation, and I am told that the last time any government Department requested confidential CALURA information as opposed to the one that is published, was in the years 1983-84 when the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources sought information for a survey that the Petroleum Monitoring Agency Canada was carrying out. I understand that there also could have been a request made by the International Trade Commission in the preparation of the so-called free trade negotiations that are under way, or perhaps just terminated.

Under the present system, I am told that the confidentiality of the information is ensured by requiring that the Minister of the policy Department make a formal request for the data and state the reason he requires or his Department requires the information.

It is not too clear to me why the Government is restating the objective of protecting confidentiality, when that is already there under existing legislation. Nevertheless, if it is a double assurance and it makes people feel a little less apprehensive about sharing their information, so be it. It is important for those who are providing information for statistical purposes to have all types of assurance and whatever assurance they require in order that the information we receive will be as accurate as possible.

It was the previous Liberal Government in 1981 that fought quite hard with the business community in particular to give a policy Department access to that information. It did raise some controversy at that time. The initiative that was taken then did raise the ire of some people. I think it has been proven through the last six or seven years that there has been no abuse of that system. I suppose, apart from everything else, it does highlight once more the confidence that I have in Statistics Canada in carrying out its mandate and keeping information confidential.

As I stated previously, the regulatory changes to CALURA will yield somewhere in the order of \$6 million to the companies involved, because of the paper burden that will be removed from them. Those changes were made possible because of recent regulatory changes. I am told that, as a result of Bill C-91, there could be another \$1 million saved by companies. We would also have to add to that the savings by Government. It is very important that all of us who are custodians of the public purse ensure that taxpayers' money is not squandered uselessly, particularly when some of the information is not used.

The last comment I wish to make is perhaps a little more in the area of a recommendation. We think that this matter should be taken up at a legislative committee rather than being

dealt with by Committee of the Whole of the House. Sometimes when non-controversial Bills such as this come up, we do agree among ourselves to deal with the legislation in the House in Committee of the Whole rather than to send it to a legislative committee.

Although the Government has not made a request at this time, I wish to go on record as indicating that it would be important for this Bill to be dealt with at a legislative committee. The reason for that is, in the event that there are concerns by the academic community and by the users of CALURA generally that those changes could cause anyone hardship, that it would give us an opportunity to hear those grievances and to amend the legislation accordingly, if amendments are necessary.

[Translation]

Madam Speaker, I would like to use the time I have left to reiterate the confidence that I imagine all Members of this House have in Statistics Canada, a federal Government agency that, in my opinion, does a good job. I am thinking particularly of a document Statistics Canada published a few years ago, which contained information on demographic, social, financial and other conditions in our respective ridings. All Members received a copy of this publication in the fall of 1984, only a few months after the election, and I found it very useful in my work.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who took the initiative of drafting this document and having it distributed. The document contains different information for each Member since our ridings are different, and can be very useful to those who are anxious to provide satisfactory representation for their constituents and to know what kind of impact Government legislation and measures have on our respective ridings.

At this point, perhaps I may suggest that now we have the data on the 1986 Census, perhaps Statistics Canada could provide Members with an updated version. Considering the fact that as of July 13 next year, electoral boundaries will be changed, I think it would be appropriate for Statistics Canada to make arrangements now for providing Members with a document on their electoral districts that would be updated in terms of the new boundaries we will have to cope with if elections are held after July 13, 1988.

As I said before, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate Statistics Canada on an initiative that has proved very useful. Madam Speaker, you may be wondering whether this last statement has any connection with the Bill before the House at this time. I am inclined to think so, because the document in question, which is quite detailed, probably uses some of the information provided under the Bill or the legislation we are now considering.

In any case, Madam Speaker, I would like to say, in concluding, that at least in our Party, we see no reason for preventing this Bill from going through the usual process and