

regions, the regions which sent them to this chamber. How can they justify that in their minds?

Saturday afternoon, there was a public meeting in my riding. Several things were bothering the people of my riding, that are reflected in this bill. Somebody said to me that the record of the last 14 years of this government is characterized by several strategies, supported in large measure by the NDP. One of the characteristics of this government is to cover up or hide the truth, especially financial truth.

The history of EPF and the government's lies about what is going on with EPF is a characteristic strategy of that time. They try to cover up the truth. The finance minister said there was going to be a shortfall of a little over \$3 billion. Lo and behold, a month later when some provincial people computed the numbers, the finance department admits it had underestimated the amount by \$1.9 billion. That is one thousand nine hundred million dollars, a small mistake. It is a typical mistake. What will the mistake be tomorrow? That is one of the strategies of the government as supported by members opposite.

The second strategy is to transfer the decision-making, the blame and everything else, to appointed people and away from elected people. There are over 450 Crown corporations. All deputy ministers are appointed by the Prime Minister. There are our courts. In almost every piece of legislation, there is a new board or commission being appointed in private through order in council. The amount of remuneration is determined by the cabinet, not by elected people. There is never a principle of scrutiny.

The third tactic is to create chaos, discord and fights, so that the media will concentrate on the fight and the personalities and lose sight of the policy issue. Can we concentrate the media fight between provincial ministers and federal ministers and get all the press people and television cameras looking at the fight, and ignore the fact that in Canada today waiting lists for entry into hospitals are growing? Our Minister of National Health and Welfare (Miss Bégin), talks about finances. I searched long and hard to see whether she had made a speech which talked about health care issues, and I cannot find any. May I call it ten o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

● (2200)

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*Translation*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

80112-16

Adjournment Debate

THE ECONOMY—INQUIRY WHETHER MINISTER WILL MEET
PROVINCIAL MINISTERS TO ESTABLISH PROGRAM TO
STIMULATE ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Mr. Marcel Roy (Laval): Mr. Speaker, last year on December 4, I asked the Minister responsible for Small Businesses and Tourism (Mr. Lapointe) about the Parti Québécois government's habit of boycotting federal-provincial conferences held in Ottawa. In fact, this boycott had affected a number of departments and agencies including Agriculture, Justice and Status of Women, and finally Tourism. The boycott was not only political, as practised by members of the National Assembly and ministers, but also involved Quebec civil servants who were forbidden to take part in federal-provincial conferences.

Considering this question, Mr. Speaker, and the disastrous economic situation in Quebec—25 per cent of the labour force lives in Quebec and one out of every three unemployed Canadians lives in Quebec as well. The province has about one third of Canada's unemployed workers, and I and all federal Liberal members from Quebec are particularly concerned that 20 per cent of those under 25 are among the unemployed, that we have the highest tax rates in Canada—20 per cent to 25 per cent higher than anywhere else—and that we pay the highest price for gas compared to the other Canadian provinces.

Mr. Speaker, 52 per cent of the province's budget is spent on the civil service payroll and only 2 per cent on job creation. This is a matter of concern, Mr. Speaker. The province has 8 per cent fewer civil servants than Ontario, but has 35 per cent fewer people, which means that Quebec's civil service is much larger than Ontario's, and its members earn \$3,250 more, on average.

That reminds me, Mr. Speaker, of the report on the economic situation tabled by the Quebec development and planning board. The board is a provincial agency, and in its report, it pointed out that for the year 1981-82, the government of Quebec would have a budget deficit of \$2.5 billion, and that three quarters of the deficit, namely, \$1.7 billion, was due to the fact that employees in the public sector were better paid than those in the private sector. That was one of the conclusions drawn by the Quebec development and planning board.

In light of the facts I have just mentioned, I asked the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Gray) whether there were any plans for a meeting with provincial authorities in order to establish a joint economic recovery program for Quebec. Instead of thinking about fielding candidates in the next federal elections, perhaps the Parti Québécois would be better advised to put its own house in order before criticizing its next door neighbour.

It seems to me that in light of this situation—these olympic-sized deficits—we as federal members from Quebec have a share in the development of these policies, and I therefore ask the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Regional Economic Expansion to meet with his Quebec counterparts in