

*Government of Canada*

The Business Council on National Issues originally proposed that we should have free trade, supported by a Bay Street lawyer, Donald Macdonald, a former Liberal Cabinet Minister who headed the Macdonald Commission. He indicated that he too thought Canada should have free trade. Many business spokespeople have advocated that we go to the kind of tariff cuts and the other arrangements that so fundamentally affect Canadian sovereignty involved in the free trade agreement. But when it comes down to average Canadians, the situation is the opposite. Farmers, trade unionists, auto workers and people in the cultural industries, who are concerned about the survival of Canada's soul and culture, are overwhelmingly opposed. It is ironic that the Government should claim it has a consensus when the consensus it has is a view of the world which may be held by Mr. D'Aquino and his friends in the Business Council on National Issues, which may be held by the major corporations in Canada but which increasingly is not a view held by average Canadians.

In the last two or three weeks there has been a dramatic shift in opinion in Ontario against the free trade deal. I believe that we will find very shortly that a dramatic shift is taking place in other parts of the country as well. Yet the Prime Minister and his Government are threatening our country with a trade deal which will hurt those average Canadians, and people are beginning to realize it.

I would like to go on, but I believe it is five o'clock. I intend to continue when this debate resumes tomorrow or whenever it is called again.

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Order. It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's order paper.

● (1700)

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS--MOTIONS

[English]

### GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

#### ADVISABILITY OF ESTABLISHING GUIDELINES FOR ANNUAL REPORTS OF FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND CROWN CORPORATIONS

**Mr. Alan Redway (York East)** moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of establishing uniform guidelines and an evaluation procedure similar to those presently in use in Australia, upon which Government Departments, Boards, Crown Corporations and Agencies should base their annual reports and thereby establish a system by which those reports which have most effectively complied with these guidelines may be acknowledged.

He said: Mr. Speaker, if you are like me, and I suspect that at least to some extent you are, you receive dozens and dozens of annual reports every week of the year. I do not know what you do with those annual reports. Perhaps you sit down deep in

the recesses of your office and read through each one in careful detail, starting off at the beginning of the year and working your way toward the end of the year. Perhaps you stay up burning the midnight oil, trying to get those reports read from cover to cover.

I can see by your motions, Mr. Speaker, that that is in fact the way you treat these things. I thought that maybe, just maybe, you might have filled your garbage basket with quite a few of these reports. If you do not fill up your garbage basket with these annual reports on a regular basis, I venture to say that you have a hard time battling your way through the front door of your office after you have been in it for a year or two. So many of these reports are received all the time. I know that you must have the same problems I do.

Reports are issued on just about every conceivable situation and every conceivable body seems to send out these reports. The Freshwater Fish Marketing Board does. I know that if our hon. colleague from the Western Arctic were here, he would rise to shake his fist after hearing about the Freshwater Fish Marketing Board. We receive annual reports from the Dairy Commission, from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and from the Bank of Canada. I see my hon. friend, the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Assiniboine (Mr. McKenzie) shuddering when I mention the annual report of the Bank of Canada. That is one of his favourite subjects, and I hope he will have a few things to say about the annual reports from the Bank of Canada.

We receive annual reports from just about everyone. In fact, we received one today, and you probably read it already, Mr. Speaker. The report we received today was from the Department of National Revenue, Customs, Excise and Taxation, for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1987. Does it not strike you as a little strange, Mr. Speaker, that today is December 8, 1987, and we are just receiving the annual report of the Department of National Revenue for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1987? It should strike you as strange. However, it should not strike you as being any stranger than the way we receive all these other annual reports.

As the House knows, we receive annual reports from Departments, boards and commissions. Sometimes we get them from Crown corporations and sometimes we do not because they are not all under the same obligation to report.

As you have gone through all these annual reports, Mr. Speaker, you may have been impressed by them. I see you shaking your head, and I know that, like me, you were not really impressed by them. In fact, if you were not, you are in good company. You are in good company because not many Members of Parliament, I suspect, are impressed by them, and certainly the Auditor General of Canada has indicated that he is not impressed by them at all. In fact, I am sure you read his annual report from cover to cover. It is a thin little volume in which he says specifically that he is not impressed with the quality of the annual reporting that goes on by all these boards, commissions, Departments and corporations.