

four years totalled only 350,000, less than 90,000 per year or a mere 0.35 per cent of the population.

The minister might well counsel the government to adopt a pro-active, energetic immigration policy rather than allow the dissemination of the view that immigration is a cause of problems facing Canada when an intelligent analysis sees them as a solution.

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THE SENATE

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Mr. Speaker, recent events have clearly shown that Canadians reject the Senate's continuing battle to frustrate the will of the elected Parliament. Canadians reject the Senate's continued use of that place for repeated partisan purposes. I am sure that the people of Canada will also reject the battle being waged by a number of senators to maintain and enhance their privileges.

The resignation of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod has highlighted the desperate need either to reform or abolish the other place. At a time when all Canadians are being asked to accept restraint in government spending, it is shocking that the other place continues to guard jealously ancient privileges and spurn the introduction of modern management practices.

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GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Meritt): Mr. Speaker, seniors across Canada have received an innocent looking leaflet entitled: *The GST: Information for Seniors*.

The leaflet states that 84 per cent of Canadian seniors will receive a tax credit of \$190, paid by cheque four times a year, by filling out the GST credit form. It also reminds seniors that they will be protected by social programs fully indexed to the cost of living.

As a result of this leaflet, many seniors now believe that they will be receiving four cheques of \$190 each year, and that the GST credit, like other social programs,

will be automatically and fully indexed. This simply is not the case.

• (1410)

The GST credit will not offset the increased cost of the GST and \$190 is not enough to compensate seniors for the GST they will pay. Because the GST credit is not fully indexed to inflation, fewer and fewer seniors will be eligible, even though they remain at the same fixed income. It is time that seniors learned the truth about the GST.

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LITERACY

Mr. Willie Littlechild (Wetaskiwin): Mr. Speaker, the United Nations has declared 1990 to be International Literacy Year. The House of Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs is committed to the objectives as set forth by UNESCO.

Canada has strong linguistic traditions, not only in French and English, but in the richness and diversity of the many languages spoken by native peoples. Unfortunately, it has been estimated that as many as 30 per cent of aboriginal youth, ages 16 to 24, do not possess reading and writing skills of a grade nine level.

Widespread illiteracy has profound implications for society as economic costs to Canadians run into the billions of dollars as a result of unemployment and the other consequences of illiteracy. The well-being of the family and an individual's feeling of positive self-worth are adversely affected by the poverty and social alienation associated with the inability to read and write.

The Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs will travel this week to four regions in Canada to meet with native leaders and educators. It is our hope that, by receiving information firsthand, the committee will be better able to make realistic and productive recommendations to Parliament regarding the most effective means of tackling this significant issue.

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ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Ethel Blondin (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, this past weekend in Kanata I attended a powwow with hundreds of aboriginal people and other citizens sponsored by the Odawa Friendship Centre. I wish all members could have experienced the sensation of watch-