

[Translation]

GALA DES FIDÉIDES

Mrs. Suzanne Duplessis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Science and Technology)): Mr. Speaker, last Thursday evening in Quebec City, 800 people attended the *Gala des Fidéides* to celebrate excellence and top performances in the business world.

I would like to congratulate all finalists and award winners: Restaurant Melrose, Transport Besner, Berclain Gestion Opérationnelle, Multitel Inc., *Centre d'arbitrage commercial national et international du Québec*, *Systèmes Fortune 1000* and Glaverbec, and pay special tribute to the organizer of this event, the Sainte-Foy Chamber of Commerce, which together with other local chambers of commerce made this evening a tremendous success.

This is further proof that the Quebec City area has a dynamic business community.

* * *

MANPOWER AND OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING

Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, annually, the federal government and the Government of Quebec spend nearly one million dollars on manpower and occupational training programs. Forty per cent of these expenditures is earmarked for program administration.

Duplication and overlap resulting from both governments' failure to co-ordinate their initiatives are responsible for another \$100 million being wasted. In fact, what we have here is a net loss of \$500 million. Taxpayers are getting only 50 cents worth of direct services for every dollar invested.

That is why the Conseil du patronat, the central labour bodies, the Co-operative Movement, the Quebec Liberal Party, the Parti Québécois and the Equality Party are asking for patriation to Quebec of all powers with respect to manpower and occupational training.

S. O. 31

• (1410)

[English]

CHILD POVERTY

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the National Council of Welfare, an advisory committee to the government, tabled a report which stated that this government is the first government in history to pull back from its basic commitment to the needs of the poor.

In January, the Senate Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology tabled its report "Children in Poverty: Towards a Better Future". In its list of 16 recommendations, the committee calls on the government to fully support the objective of substantially reducing child poverty in Canada and show leadership by undertaking co-operative strategies with other levels of government and the public at large to address the needs of our country's children.

The report also recommends that a national conference involving all levels of government and the general public on the subject of shared solutions to the problem of child poverty be held within the next 12 months.

In light of the Prime Minister's commitment and that of his government to the ratification of the UN declaration of the rights of the child, it is indeed pressing that such a meeting be called. Allowing children to grow up in poverty is not an option we can afford to leave unaddressed.

* * *

EARTH DAY 1991

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound—Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, 10.02 p.m. tonight marks the vernal equinox, the beginning of spring, the time when light and darkness are equal in both hemispheres of our planet. It also marks the celebration of Earth Day 1991, which this year is being held at the United Nations General Assembly.

At exactly 10.02 p.m., the United Nations Peace Bell, a symbol of global harmony cast in 1954 and made from melted coins collected by children around the world, will be rung three times by the personal representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations signalling a global moment of silent reflection and prayer for the well-being of Mother Earth. After the minute of silence, all available ambassadors from UN member states will each ring the bell one time to indicate global solidarity and the desire to preserve and nurture our common home, Earth.