

Government Orders

I am disappointed of course that the process has taken so long to get us to this point but in hindsight it is understandable. We all knew that the regulatory process was going to slow us down. It has. We tried to address that in the committee but now that we have that under wraps, I am happy to see it has moved along. In addition to the amendments that the minister outlined she will be presenting to the House this morning I would like to indicate that I think there is a need to further amend the regulatory process and involve members of the House and Parliament to a greater extent than the process. I will be working to see that that happens.

In conclusion, I would like to suggest to the minister that in keeping with her comments about the aboriginal rights and the stewardship of their traditional land that she consider applying the new process to the situation in Labrador and the Innu at this time.

* * *

INCOME TAX ACT

Hon. Roger Simmons (Burin—St. George's) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-282, an act to amend the Income Tax Act (medical expenses—disabled senior citizens).

He said: Mr. Speaker, the objective of this bill is to reduce income tax for disabled seniors with extra medical expenses. Under the current law the first \$1,614 or 3 per cent of net income is required to be spent before you can take it into account for income tax purposes.

This bill would make it possible for all eligible medical expenses from the very first dollar to be effectively income deductible for disabled seniors. I believe there is a need to do that.

While disabled seniors have higher medical expenses than others they generally have lower income than other people. Paying out of pocket medical expenses is therefore a heavier burden for this group of people, disabled seniors, than for others. This bill is a step in the direction of easing that burden.

In that context I have much pleasure in having the bill introduced at this time.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed.)

* * *

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I think you will find there is unanimous consent for the following motion:

That notwithstanding any order of the House, the report deadline for phase II of the order of reference to the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development on February 8, 1994, government business No. 4, be extended to February 6, 1995, and

That the committee be empowered to authorize radio and television broadcasting of any of its proceedings.

(Motion agreed to.)

* * *

● (1040)

PETITIONS**ASSISTED SUICIDE**

Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I wish to table a petition from several of my constituents who humbly pray that Parliament not repeal or amend section 241 of the Criminal Code in any way to uphold the Supreme Court of Canada's decision of September 30, 1993, to disallow assisted suicide or euthanasia.

* * *

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Shall all questions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

SOCIAL SECURITY PROGRAMS

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification) moved:

That this House take note of the progress made to date on the government's forthcoming reform of social security programs and of the views expressed by Canadians with regard to this reform.

He said: Mr. Speaker, let me begin by expressing my appreciation to House leaders of all parties in the House for their agreement in helping to organize this first major debate where we have an opportunity to begin to express our views as parliamentarians.

I have been a parliamentarian for over 20 years. I have always had a deep abiding belief and faith that this is the place where people prevail, not the self-appointed experts and commentators and people who rush to the mikes before they read reports. This is the place where people gain their voice. This is the place where each of us has an opportunity to speak on behalf of our constituents, who really are what makes this country work, to go beyond and around and through the smokescreens and static and noise that we often hear in terms of the immediate surrounding corridors of Parliament Hill and get back to where people really have an opportunity to decide.