

*Adjournment Debate*

Member of Parliament, the House of Commons would naturally attract individuals from a larger cross-section of society. The Hon. Member for Nickel Belt has ably pointed out that individuals, who are leaders in their field but cannot pursue elected office due to financial restraints, could now seek it, for their future would be secure. Thus, the electoral process would be fairer and the brightest individuals would seek public office, which would ensure that innovative ideas could be brought to the forefront. In addition, ensuring that an individual has something to go back to allow Canada to have a better across-the-board representation, since it would free up more individuals to seek office.

As I stated before, serving one's country is the highest honour for an individual to attain. By ensuring that their financial future is secure, more people can make a contribution to Canada. However, before we proceed the implications must be more thoroughly examined, for both positions I have discussed are valued and deserve merit.

Certainly Bill C-237 makes an attempt to address an issue with which all democratic countries have constantly wrestled. There is no doubt that Bill C-237 needs further discussion but its thrust is logical, for it would indeed make elected office more accessible to more people. That is what democracy is all about.

I commend the Hon. Member for Nickel Belt for bringing the matter to our attention today. There are some very good points in the piece of legislation. In fact, I was faced with making such a decision myself. I had been employed by a company for 23 years, and I cannot go back to it. However, I think the individual must make the decision.

I thank the Hon. Member for bringing the matter before us today. I think we should talk more about it and look at it from more angles, and perhaps the Bill will eventually go forward and result in a system which is open to many more Canadians.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne):** The hour provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired. Pursuant to Standing Order 42(1), the order is dropped from the Order Paper.

## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 66 deemed to have been moved.

### AGRICULTURE—LOSS OF MEAT INSPECTION STAMP AT KITCHENER PLANT/REDUCED NUMBER OF INSPECTORS

**Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma):** Madam Speaker, on September 28, I raised an issue concerning the integrity of the Canadian meat packing and meat inspection system of the Government of Canada. This was brought on by two concerns.

First was that in late August or early September a meat inspection stamp was lost at the J. M. Schneider plant in Kitchener. There does not seem to be any clear answer from the Government on whether or not the stamp has been found.

There are reports that there is a very slipshod and loose mechanism for maintaining the security of stamps in that plant, but I was seeking reassurance from the Government that action was being taken to recover the lost stamp, to ensure that it was not being used in a fraudulent and counterfeit way, and to ensure that necessary security steps were being taken. The matter has been reported in the press, and there was general public concern about the integrity and security of the entire system. I did not receive anything very specific as to whether the stamp was found, whether it had been replaced, used fraudulently or whether a police investigation was carried out or what had happened. He only responded in a general way.

• (1815)

The second area and my supplementary question concerned the Government's program of cutting back the number of meat inspectors across the country. On October 1, just two days after my question, the Government implemented a new program in the Province of Ontario which will cut back the number of inspectors in poultry plants, at least in two pilot plants, to 85 per cent of what we had in the past. In one very large plant the number of inspectors is being reduced from around 35 to around 30 and turning over that inspection to plant personnel who do not have the same objectivity or responsibility that a government inspector has. The more concerning aspect is that the program is being implemented in two plants and will ultimately be implemented across the entire country, as I understand it, on January 1. I am seeking reassurance that this system of rapid or streamlined inspection of broilers and poultry meat will pass the test of quality.

In the United States the system has been highly discredited. The subject has been raised on popular programs like *60 Minutes* on several occasions showing it is totally inadequate. When we are adopting a program of that nature in Canada we should have the reassurance from the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise) that the system will meet the high standards set in the past and will not become a mirror image of the highly discredited American system which is being copied by the Minister of Agriculture and the Government of Canada.

I hope the Parliamentary Secretary in responding tonight can provide some reassurance not only to me and to this House of Commons but to Canadians that the system is intact, that there are adequate controls in place, that the integrity of the system is being maintained both in the inspection of poultry-killing plants and in the case of the lost stamp which is an important instrument for insuring the integrity of our meat inspection system in Canada.

[Translation]

**Mr. Claude Lanthier (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works):** Mr. Speaker, the inspection legend on the