

Supply

Minister to go there, instead of 12 official committee members, together with members who were invited by the Prime Minister to go at a cost of \$200,000 or \$300,000? Does the member who just spoke not feel that we are squandering public funds and forgetting to find solutions for the problems of unemployment and the economy? It seems that the only criterion guiding this government, and I close on this point, Madam Speaker, is just a hope that interest rates and the economy will get back on track. It has no philosophy; in other words, it governs from one crisis to the next, without clear objectives.

[*English*]

Mr. Mills: Madam Speaker, I can hardly believe that the member for Richelieu would throw me such a lob ball.

I think that this government would probably be saving \$4 billion to \$5 billion a year if we did not have to contend with the separatist threat that comes from these six, seven or eight members. I cannot even remember how many of their members sit in this House, this nation's boardroom, the boardroom of Canada. I was elected here to try and do productive things to keep the country together. They are constantly sewing doubt and seeds of division which infect foreign investment and investor confidence. They do not realize that this \$125 million, or whatever, is to try and keep this nation together. I do not know of a Canadian who would not support a bill to spend that amount of money if it meant keeping this nation together.

The member for Richelieu does not believe in this country. He is trying to separate, trying to set up a sovereign country for Quebec, which view obviously I do not support.

Canadians do not question that. They do not question that. But what they would like to see at the same time is the government, because of the dissension and the division and the lack of unity in this country, which is mostly caused by this sort of separatist thrust that we are eventually going to have to face right on in the next 30 or 60 or 90 days, get that resolved one way or the other. Then I think we are going to go back to being that united galvanized country that we were before this nonsense started.

• (2150)

Mr. Bill Domm (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for Science): Madam Speaker, the members are well aware, I trust, of the government's ambitious program to reform the Public Service to make it even more efficient and client oriented. Getting better value for the tax dollar has been the order of the day. Available resources have had to be redirected to the point of service delivery, that is where the client is, and away from overhead and administrative processes. Only through this action could the adverse effects of restraint on programs and services be minimized.

Changing how government does business means more than rethinking what government does. It means more than getting out of some activities, consolidating others, eliminating duplication and unnecessary processes, postponing some purchases and setting aside some worthwhile activities that cannot be afforded. It means improving how government does things to direct taxpayers' dollars toward better, more responsive and more client-oriented services, particularly at the point of service delivery; to make it easier for individuals and businesses to deal with government; and finally to focus resources and energies on clients' needs and ensure that public servants are ready, willing and able to resolve problems, answer questions and provide service courteously and quickly.

Concrete measures are being taken to improve services for businesses, more specifically to facilitate, streamline and modernize business dealings with government. One example is the move to a single business registration number. Another is the government's proceeding toward fully automated procurement that will reduce transaction costs and speed up the administrative processes.

A systematic internal review of the existing regulatory burden in each department and each sector is being launched. Regulations will be reviewed to ensure that: government intervention remains justified, regulation is the best among available alternatives, the design of the regulatory program maximizes the gains to beneficiaries in relation to the cost to Canadian governments, businesses and individuals, and resources are available to allow efficient compliance and enforcement.