

• (1505)

POINTS OF ORDER

QUESTION PERIOD

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in an earlier statement in the House an answer that I gave was qualified as feeble. My point of order is that it was in fact incredibly decisive and strong. In any event, I withdraw the s.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Ray Speaker (Lethbridge, Ref.): On a point of order, I have a question for the House leader of the government with regard to potential legislation coming before the House.

The Speaker: My colleague, you will recall that last Thursday we had a very brief exchange on this. Of course I will permit clarification of whatever is coming up. We do not usually do any dealing here on the floor, so I know that the question will be quite to the point.

Mr. Speaker (Lethbridge): Could the hon. House leader of the government indicate whether there is going to be any consideration with regard to legislation on unemployment insurance on the list he gave today?

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, legislation on that topic was not on the list I read out today.

All I can suggest to my hon. friend is that he keep an eye on the Order Paper.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

AUDITOR GENERAL ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I was looking forward to speaking on third reading of Bill C-83 because of the debate we had last Monday on an amendment we tabled that would have deleted paragraphs (a) to (h) in clause 21(1) of the bill. I very much wanted to clarify a fundamental difference between members of the Bloc Quebecois and other members in this House.

We in the Bloc Quebecois are sovereignists and we come from Quebec. In other words, we support Quebec's sovereignty and are opposed to any form of intrusion in its jurisdictions, while

Government Orders

seeking to expand those jurisdictions until Quebecers decide to have their own country.

Obviously we do not have the same outlook as the other members of this House, who are federalists. When a bill is tabled, we do not consider or analyze the bill in the same way the Liberals, Reform members and the remaining Conservatives do, who are federalists. They still believe in federalism but we do not. They believe in intrusion and imposition but we do not.

It is only normal that we should see bills like the one we are discussing today as potential for encroachment on Quebec's jurisdictions, while the other parties do not see it that way.

The deep-seated convictions of each and everyone of us mean that our points of view are different. We always try to assess the short and longer term impact of legislation on the prerogatives of the provinces. And when we consider the longer term effects, we feel that Bill C-83 will have a negative impact on the prerogatives of Quebec and thus on the environment.

From our point of view, the environment must be a provincial responsibility if we are to protect it, preserve it and, in many cases, restore it. We think it is clear the provinces have come a long way and today have most of the responsibilities in this area.

It is up to them to respond to their people and to pass effective legislation and set up programs and projects to preserve the environment. Many are already doing so, with good results. Quebec has assumed its responsibilities and done its homework. Furthermore, Quebec has led the way in a number of areas, including environmental assessment.

• (1510)

Looking at the federal side, there is not much to get excited about. The environmental effects are very watered down, and interest in the environment is not all that high and is a relatively recent thing. On the other hand, what is most remarkable about the federal government, the Liberal government in particular, is its great desire to become the saviour of the environment and to push aside the provinces more and more. It does this by riding over them roughshod, duplicating legislation, regulations, programs. The effects of this desire to interfere and to take over the helm at any price are very harmful to both the environment and the economy.

Bill C-83 has not escaped this constantly increasing desire by the feds to throw their weight around in the environmental area, as in a number of others. I wanted to explain this fundamental difference between us and the other members of this House because of what the hon. member for Davenport said about me last Monday. He wondered, and I quote: "—is it perhaps that the member for Laurentides badly needs a psychiatrist to remove her obsession with federal-provincial relations, her obsession