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 Speaker: Shall the remaining questions stand?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*Translation*]

PEARSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS AGREEMENT ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion and amendment.

Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies): Mr. Speaker, before the break in the question period, like all of my colleagues present here today, including the Reform Party members, I mentioned the non-transparency of the government in the cancellation of the Pearson Airport privatization. Afterwards, I spoke of the general lack of transparency on the part of the government each time they are asked to open the books to the public whether in the House or in committee.

Added to that is the fact that when there is no transparency, someone has to be blamed for the way things are going. So they talked about welfare recipients and the unemployed. I heard the Deputy Prime Minister say this morning, in reply to a Reform Party question, that the question was a vicious attack on the unemployed when in fact it was absolutely reasonable.

I would like to remind the Deputy Prime Minister that the most vicious attack against the unemployed and welfare recipients was made by her own government and the Prime Minister himself when he accused all the unemployed of being beer-guzzling couch potatoes.

Then they tried to blame the whole thing on Quebec's whims. If everything is going wrong in Canada, it is due to some passing fancy of that province. But it is a well-known fact that all of Canada's history can be reduced to Quebec's attempt to obtain real powers within Confederation. We only have to remember the various commissions that followed one after the other and that cost an enormous amount of money: Laurendeau-Dunton, Pépin-Robarts, Spicer, Beaudoin-Dobbie, Castonguay-Dobbie, Dobbie-Dobbie, and so on ad infinitum, up until the Meech Lake and Charlottetown Accord failures.

Non-transparency also in the way the facts are presented. Another issue was raised this morning. Another 65,000 Canadians have joined the ranks of the unemployed. When the Deputy Prime Minister was asked how she could explain this, she told us that these 65,000 people had regained hope at last. In reality, these 65,000 people have lost their jobs, so we have non-transparency in the way the facts are presented.

They suggested that if things were not going well in the country, it was because of separatists, when we know full well that the Moody's credit-rating agency has just issued a warning to the government. If things are not going well in Canada, it is not because of separatists, it is because we owe $500 billion to our bankers, because we are unable to pay them and because we swear to them that in three years we will owe them $600 billion. That is serious.

As far as separatists are concerned, I remind this hon. House that Senator Ted Kennedy, who has been around for a while, said that Quebec sovereignty would not be a problem, that they could live with it. If Quebec opted for sovereignty, Americans would not have a problem with that.

And this too is part of the non-transparency. I remember the Prime Minister jokingly indicated to this House that construction of a high-speed train could not be seriously contemplated because there could be a border between Quebec and Ontario. In fact, there has been a statement on this subject today. In Europe, high-speed trains run across all the countries and nobody seems to have a problem with that. A high-speed train running through the recently opened Chunnel will link two countries and that does not seem to cause any problems.

• (1215)

Every day, hundreds of trains circulate freely between the United States and Canada, and that does not appear to create any problem. Yet, there seems to be difficulties when trains travel between Quebec and Ontario. Therefore, I think that the facts are totally misrepresented. The presentation of those facts lacks transparency.

It is also suggested—again by the Prime Minister—that we are afraid of him coming to Quebec during the next election or referendum campaign. Indeed, I must recognize that we are afraid, but we are afraid that he might not come.

There are many issues which require greater transparency, and there are many people in Quebec who have very specific questions to ask to the Prime Minister on these issues, including his role in the decision to impose the War Measures Act in Quebec, which resulted in hundreds of people being beaten up, imprisoned and deprived of their rights. In fact, all Quebecers were deprived of their rights. Yet, the facts clearly demonstrated later that there was no justification for such action.

Quebecers also have questions to ask the Prime Minister regarding the unilateral patriation of the Canadian Constitution, a decision which was unanimously rejected by Quebec's Nation-