

Private Members' Business

member that they do now have to produce three. So these maps in fact could be quite helpful.

The census figures that were set out on a geographic basis for the entire country will be available to the new commissions as were to the old. All that work will not be duplicated.

For the hon. member to suggest that we have trashed everything by this bill and wasted \$7 million is not accurate. We will have good use for some of things that have happened. Certainly some of the money that was spent on advertising will not be spent a second time. We are not going to trash everything and waste all the money. We are moving to save money with the new redistribution. There will be some loss from the expenses already incurred.

However, had the hon. member been vigorous in supporting our first bill instead of supporting the senators who held it up and cost the taxpayers millions of dollars, we would be away ahead of the game. If those commissions had cancelled as soon as the bill was introduced we would have saved several million dollars. It was wasted because the hon. member and the Senate got into bed together and blocked the passage of the bill and cost us a lot of money as has—

The Deputy Speaker: There are two minutes to go. I do not believe the member for Rimouski—Témiscouata wishes to begin her speech. I wonder if we might call it 5.30 by agreement.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: It being 5.30 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business, as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

STATUTORY PROGRAM EVALUATION ACT

Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.) moved that Bill C-289, an act to provide for evaluations of statutory programs, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am glad to speak to this private member's bill. Unfortunately, it has been designated a non-votable bill and will not be referred to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

However, there is a tide in the affairs of men which when taken at the flood leads on to fortune. Shakespeare said this 400 years ago. There is a tide today that is causing government to re-examine its profligate ways and return to the sanity of fiscal

responsibility, hence ensuring the prosperity of Canadians in future generations.

Canadian taxpayers have seen their taxes rise dramatically over the last 15 to 20 years in the name of reining in the budget deficit. Yet that deficit is no closer to being tamed than in the years before. We have had a continuous stream of finance ministers stand in the House and proclaim that the battle will be won through the increased taxes that they have introduced. These have been empty promises. We have listened to finance ministers tell us that spending is being constrained in the name of deficit reduction. Every year when we add it all up, the spending has gone up.

What is the problem? When more and more taxes only contain the unsustainable deficit, the problem is being perceived as insurmountable. Perhaps the real reason lies in the way we spend taxpayers' money and the needs we as a government have perceived as needs to be addressed.

Over the years governments past and present have created programs to address virtually every perceivable need for Canadians from health to unemployment, grain transportation, disaster relief, alleviating aboriginal problems, educating our young, combating poverty, heritage, industrial development and international marketing. The list is endless.

Some of these programs are highly visible. They serve Canadians every day. Some are out of sight of the Canadian taxpayer and yet we hope are performing some valuable service. Some are out of date and out of touch. Some are just plain obsolete. Some continue because no one has bothered to shut them down. They are forgotten, expensive and ongoing. Are they Beneficial? No.

In this day and age when we are trying to justify every dollar spent, we should take the time to evaluate on a program by program basis what we are actually doing and why.

The President of the Treasury Board has announced that 45,000 civil servants are going to lose their jobs. Is that because we have suddenly found out their work was irrelevant? I doubt it.

Somehow the Treasury Board is telling us that government can do the job required with 45,000 fewer civil servants. We do not have these answers, only questions and concerns. What does it mean for those Canadians who depend on a certain program? Will it still be there for them tomorrow?

What about the career of a civil servant which has suddenly been shattered? What does the future hold for him? Why did we find out now that we can dispense with 45,000 civil servants? It did not appear apparent to us last year or the year before that we could dispense with these civil servants, 30,000 of them, 20,000 of them or 10,000 of them. Why now?