

**Hon. Joyce Fairbairn (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I would not wish to put a statistic on that question. Because of the nature of gathering statistics in this country, any number would probably be understated.

One issue which has always been in the forefront of the minds of aboriginal peoples is their inherent right to self-government. Another fundamental issue for aboriginal communities is the education of their people. As my honourable friend knows, the reach of the programs in which I am involved is, of necessity, limited. However, I can assure honourable senators that there are aboriginal programs in place through the National Literacy Secretariat and also through cooperative efforts with the provinces. We support these aboriginal programs to the fullest extent possible. We also support the literacy efforts of the Assembly of First Nations. I only wish we had more resources to give them for their work.

I know that my colleague the Minister of Indian Affairs is also concerned with this issue. This is a fundamental issue for aboriginal people, and any development, opportunities and solutions must begin with their youngest people. I wish I could do more.

**Senator Kinsella:** Some native leaders with whom I work at the university in my province held a seminar on this issue. This question arose: In the last two years, how many new programs have begun, directed specifically to combat illiteracy with native youth?

**Senator Fairbairn:** I will have the officials at the National Literacy Secretariat provide me with that information as we have it. Again, my honourable friend will know that we are restricted in what we can do. Some of the efforts that exist in this area also exist at the provincial level. I will try to get as much information as I can for my honourable friend.

#### DELAYED ANSWER TO ORAL QUESTION

**Hon. B. Alasdair Graham (Deputy Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, I have a response to a question raised in the Senate on October 17, 1995, by the Honourable Senator Spivak regarding the bovine growth hormone.

#### HEALTH

##### BOVINE GROWTH HORMONE—EVALUATION OF HEALTH RISK— REPRESENTATIONS FROM UNITED STATES— GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

*(Response to question raised by Hon. Mira Spivak on October 17, 1995)*

Neither the Minister of Health nor Health Canada have any knowledge or evidence of high level pressure tactics being applied at any governmental level by multinational

companies to influence the evaluation and licensing decision of rBST by Health Canada.

This position is substantiated by the fact that Health Canada scientists, in their evaluation of rBST from the Monsanto Company, have requested further scientific information with regard to animal safety and efficacy. The evaluation of this additional information cannot commence until the manufacturer has forwarded it to Health Canada, a process which could take many months.

#### ANSWER TO ORDER PAPER QUESTION TABLED

##### EMPLOYMENT

**Hon. B. Alasdair Graham (Deputy Leader of the Government)** tabled the answer to Question No. 108 on the Order Paper — by Senator Oliver.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### CUSTOMS ACT CUSTOMS TARIFF

##### BILL TO AMEND—THIRD READING

**Hon. B. Alasdair Graham (Deputy Leader of the Government)** moved the third reading of Bill C-102, to amend the Customs Act and the Customs Tariff, and to make related and consequential amendments to other acts.

Motion agreed to and bill read third time and passed.

##### EMPLOYMENT EQUITY BILL

##### CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF STANDING SENATE COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY—REFERRED BACK TO COMMITTEE

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the eleventh report of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology regarding Bill C-64, respecting employment equity, presented in the Senate on November 22, 1995.

**Hon. Rose-Marie Losier-Cool:** Honourable senators, I move the adoption of the report.

##### MOTION IN AMENDMENT

**Hon. Eric Arthur Berntson (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, after some discussion with my counterpart, it has been determined that there may be some deficiencies in this bill. In any event, there may be some interest in calling further witnesses before the committee.