

Government Orders

hon. member to perhaps refer to a cross benefit analysis that he has done to substantiate his remarks.

Finally, the hon. member has not addressed the real issue here. In this legislation there is no downsizing, no streamlining and no financial savings. That quite frankly is what Canadian taxpayers are looking for from this government. Those are the things they are looking for because those are the promises of that infamous Liberal red book.

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. I would like to tell my hon. colleague that when I came to Canada I did not receive anything. Everything I did I paid for. I went to night school and I paid for the lessons. I shovelled snow in the winter and delivered groceries. I did these things and I am proud of it. However, that does not mean that because some years ago we were in a certain situation people in need should be forgotten.

I agree with the hon. member that there is abuse in the system and we are trying to correct it. I believe the hon. member does not draw a line of what the legislation is and what she would like the legislation to do.

This is a bill to organize a department. This bill is to legalize, to put in perspective of the law the departmental reorganization that the Prime Minister announced in November 1993 when we took office. She mentioned the red book. We had a promise that would cut expenses right away from the top, from the Prime Minister's office down to all the ministers of \$10 million a year. I think so far we have accounted for \$13 million. This part of the reorganization.

In terms of funding that the member is talking about, the member should take note, probably next week when the Minister of Finance goes before the finance committee and presents his budgetary vision on the next budget and consults with Canadians, of the estimates. That is where funding is provided for every program and for every department.

What we are talking about here is the legal frame of a department. We see here 40 departments that we had in 1984 reduced down to 22. These are the savings and the promise that we kept in the red book.

I invite the hon. member to wait until Wednesday when the minister of human resources will table his discussion paper on social programs. I am sure she has a lot of things to say there and I am sure she will contribute to the debate, not only in this House but also across the country. I am sure she is waiting patiently for the Minister of Finance to come to this House and go to the finance committee to give reference of his consultation for the next budget. There hopefully altogether we will continue to reduce expenses and look at ways we can serve our citizens more with less.

• (1650)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Before continuing debate on Bill C-53 it is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 38 to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: The hon. member for Mercier—unemployment; the hon. member for The Battlefords—Meadow Lake—low level flights.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my views on Bill C-53, An Act to establish the Department of Canadian Heritage and to amend and repeal certain other acts. The Department of Communications, the Department of the Secretary of State and the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship were abolished following the government reorganization announced on June 25 and November 4, 1993. This exercise resulted in the creation of a new portfolio, the Department of Canadian Heritage.

For the first time, all federal agencies in the cultural sector, including the Canada Council, CBC, the National Film Board, Telefilm Canada, the national museums and parks of Canada, the National Archives and many others, are part of a single superdepartment.

I want to quote an important provision regarding a field which comes under the minister's jurisdiction. Clause 4(g), on page 2, states that the Minister of Canadian Heritage must promote "the advancement of the equality of status and use of English and French and the enhancement and development of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada".

That clause provides a good description of the federal government's objective to promote a Canadian cultural identity primarily based on the main features of a bilingual and multicultural Canada. However, no reference is made to Quebec as a society, nor to its cultural and linguistic specificity.

Once again, Ottawa denies the distinct cultural reality of Quebec by attempting to dilute its French status and culture in a supposedly bilingual and multicultural Canadian cultural identity. The creation of that department is in compliance with the defunct Charlottetown Accord, which proposed an artificial and false recognition of the provinces' exclusive jurisdiction over culture.

Never in the past, much less now, did the federal government consider withdrawing from the cultural sector despite Quebec's demands for the transfer of cultural jurisdiction and related budgets from Ottawa. The establishment of this new department is proof positive of this: the federal government is turning a deaf ear to Quebec's demands concerning language, education and, most of all, culture.

The federal government will continue to use its spending power to play a role in Quebec without any regard to the priorities and demands of the Quebec government in matters of language, education, and culture. How many more times will we