

The Auditor General reports that corporations owe \$3 billion in unpaid taxes to Revenue Canada from 1993. He also states: "Clearly, reducing deficits through more effective tax collection is preferable to raising taxes. Taxes receivable are an important national asset and leaving them uncollected has a serious impact on the deficit".

Will the minister stop threatening students with increased costs of education and working people with cuts to UI and start paying more attention to collecting the \$3 billion owed to Revenue Canada by these corporations?

Hon. David Anderson (Minister of National Revenue, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I repeat the reply I made to a question earlier. We are coming off a particularly nasty recession. There are companies and individuals who have had a tough time of it. It would be possible for us to drive some of them into bankruptcy without necessarily collecting any more money. That would be most inappropriate for Revenue Canada to do. We will collect the revenues that are owed to us, except for a small proportion of bankrupt or companies in receivership. We cannot collect the amount that is in dispute which the taxpayer persuades us is not appropriate for it to be collected in the first place.

• (1500)

We will collect that money because our record on collection is very good; far less than one per cent of moneys owed to Revenue Canada is not collected.

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SENIORS

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health has just returned from Winnipeg where she met with her provincial and territorial colleagues responsible for seniors. I would appreciate knowing the outcome of that meeting.

What is the government doing to ensure that the needs of the seniors are met in the face of shrinking budgets and increasing demand on social programs?

Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we had some extremely productive meetings. We agreed to consider all of the concerns of our seniors, to reorient our programs to those most in need and most at risk. That fits in very well with what I have been doing as Minister of Health, that is ensuring that our seniors get the help they need by using those dollars that are available very effectively to address the most serious needs of our seniors.

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WAYS AND MEANS

NOTICE OF MOTION

Hon. Douglas Peters (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Stand-

Supply

ing Order 83(1) I wish to table a notice of ways and means motion to amend the Income Tax Act and the income tax application rules.

I ask that an order of the day be designated for consideration of the motion.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT RETIREMENT ALLOWANCE

The House resumed consideration of the motion

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to continue my remarks with regard to the opposition motion for today, that this House urge the government to replace the current members of Parliament retirement allowance plan with a pension plan that reflects the current norms for private sector pensions with a maximum contribution in accordance with the Income Tax Act.

This morning throughout the hours of debate there were a number of points made by hon. members in the House. I think it is very important to review a few of those points.

• (1505)

I think the most important aspect is the fact that during the election campaign the Prime Minister promised the Canadian people that he would reform MP pensions. He made two specific promises, the first being to end the so-called double dipping which is a case where former members of Parliament would receive appointments to government and receive not only a pension but also the compensation for that appointment to some government position. The Prime Minister has committed to eliminate double dipping.

The second was with regard to the age qualification, the age at which members of Parliament could qualify to start collecting pension benefits they were entitled to.

Yesterday the Prime Minister rose in this House and reaffirmed his commitment to make those changes and specifically said that those changes would be tabled in this House within the next few weeks.

I think the Prime Minister's commitment to this reform of our pension plan was very clearly demonstrated this morning when he rose in the House to announce that his recommendation to Her Majesty the Queen that the Hon. Romeo LeBlanc be appointed as Canada's 25th Governor General had been accepted. In the House the Prime Minister and the other leaders of the other parties rose to compliment the Prime Minister on his selection and nomination of the Hon. Romeo LeBlanc who,