

fit. We are looking forward to what an independent, objective and most eminent jurist has to say about this entire matter, just as I am sure Hon. Members opposite want to see these results. Further, the Government intends to make public Mr. Justice Estey's report upon receipt, except for any parts of his report that he himself feels should remain confidential. Again in this area, I want to stress that we have not constrained him in any way.

I believe that the approach we are taking in asking Mr. Justice Estey to conduct a commission of inquiry is the approach which is most likely to satisfy the public interest as well as result in a complete explanation of the circumstances.

● (1520)

Mr. Justice Estey has been asked to commence his commission of inquiry immediately and has advised the Government that he will begin hearings on Wednesday, October 2, 1985. He will submit his report to the Governor in Council as soon as possible.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Members will have further opportunity to debate these issues when the Bill authorizing the Government to compensate uninsured depositors is tabled in the House. In fact, this legislation is to be tabled very shortly, Mr. Speaker.

As I indicated in this morning's press release, the legislation will provide for payment to uninsured depositors of the principal amount plus interest up to September 1, 1985. Sixty per cent of the amount will be paid to each depositor concerned as soon as possible after passage of the Bill, with the remaining amount to be paid by an additional cheque post-dated April 1, 1986.

I may add that no payment will be made for interest that would have been due after September 1.

[*English*]

I hope that we will have the full co-operation of Members opposite in completing all stages of the legislation expeditiously so that the uninsured depositors can receive their payments.

As you are aware, Mr. Speaker, these depositors include some municipalities whose ability to function financially has been seriously impaired by the state of affairs involving the Canadian Commercial Bank and Northland.

Hundreds of small businesses, some credit unions, associations, charities, cultural organizations, hospitals and colleges, as well as individual Canadians are also affected and will benefit by the speedy consideration of the proposed legislation by this House.

Mr. Speaker, I hold the view that we in this House should strive to ensure that our financial system remains effective, prudent and well respected in Canada and around the world. To that end the Government will be seeking the co-operation of all Members of the House to revise and reform the legislation and regulatory processes governing the operation of Canadian financial institutions.

Statements by Ministers

On September 1, I announced our intent to introduce legislation that would give federal regulatory authorities increased powers to protect the stability and the soundness of the Canadian financial system. In addition, I have announced my intention to introduce amendments to the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation Act to ensure that the deposit insurance system will have the financial resources to continue to protect Canadian depositors of modest means. The Government intends to proceed with these reforms in the near future.

In addition, the House Finance Committee is currently holding hearings on the Government's discussion paper on financial institution reform. This document outlines the Government's over-all approach to modernizing legislation respecting Canada's financial institutions.

The recent events involving the Canadian Commercial Bank and the Northland Bank highlight the importance of this work and the need to move quickly but effectively in completing it.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to repeat that I have every faith in the viability and the strength of the Canadian banking system and in its national and international reputation. I am very much looking forward to the work and the report of Mr. Justice Estey. I assure all Members of this House that Mr. Justice Estey can count on the complete co-operation of this Government throughout his inquiry.

Mr. Raymond Garneau (Laval-des-Rapides): Mr. Speaker, in these 24 pages of ministerial statement there is one paragraph missing and it has to do with the resignation of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) and of the Minister of State for Finance (Mrs. McDougall).

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Garneau: It is a very sad day indeed that should be remembered by all Canadians for many years. After 13 months of Conservative Government we have learned today that the second Bank will be wound up.

An Hon. Member: How many more?

Mr. Garneau: Worst of all, this Government after 13 months in power was taking advantage of the employment situation, the job creation. It has taken all the credit for that even though everybody knew that it was the result of the last Budget speech. But today—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

[*Translation*]

Mr. La Salle: I would have a lot to say about that.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order, please—

Mr. La Salle: At least we act responsibly!

Mr. Speaker: The House has listened very attentively to the Minister's statement.