

Oral Questions

The hon. member knows, and I have told the House, that I will be bringing forward legislation in June to change the Young Offenders Act to reflect longer maximum sentences for serious violent crimes among other things. I have made that clear.

Let me go on to say that in the face of such tragedies, it is important in my respectful view to bear in mind that the simple change of a statute or enacting another law is not going to change much unless at the same time we come to grips with the conditions that lead to this kind of offence.

This government is committed not only to the kind of effective legislation we need, and the member will see it soon, but also to an attack on the underlying causes of crime. That is what we intend to do.

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GOVERNMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

Mrs. Brenda Chamberlain (Guelph—Wellington): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Works and Government Services.

It is widely accepted that a sound electronic infrastructure will greatly improve the efficiency of government. How is public works and government services taking advantage of tomorrow's technology to increase efficiency, improve services and reduce costs for the Canadian taxpayer today?

• (1500)

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services): Mr. Speaker, this department, government services and public works, now provides 70 per cent of the telecommunications services for the government.

It is profiting from the new electronic infrastructure programs that are available. Let me give examples very quickly. We have a program, the Electronic Mail Network, which connects 120,000 public servants across the country. It saves Canadians \$55 million per year. We have introduced an automated public service compensation system that saves Canadian taxpayers \$44 million a year.

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INFORMATION HIGHWAY

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina—Qu'Appelle): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Industry.

There is a growing concern that the information highway will be controlled by a few monopoly companies. I would like to ask the minister has the government defined what is in the public interest as it concerns the information highway? How should that public interest be implemented, protected and enforced?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry): Mr. Speaker, the question is a very good one.

I am sure the member is aware that the advisory council on the information highway has its first meeting today. In the booklet we produced on Canada's information highway with the announcement of the advisory council, we set out our objectives, including competition, jobs, accessibility and affordability for all Canadians.

Those fundamental principles and objectives are the ones that we are seeking to define. The means by which we achieve them over the course of the deliberations of the council during the next few weeks and months will define our view of the policies that should be pursued. We will be seeking the input of members of the House as well as the broader Canadian community about the impact of the regulatory environment in which we are going to operate.

It is a very important file, one on which the government will act with great care and with great interest in what the hon. member has to say to us about it.

[Translation]

The Speaker: Order! The hon. member for Laurentides has the floor on a point of order and I believe, also has the unanimous consent of the House.

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POINT OF ORDER

LEAVE TO WITHDRAW MOTION M-280

Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides): Mr. Speaker, I believe you will find that there is unanimous consent to move the following motion:

That motion M-280, in the name of Mrs. Guay (Laurentides) in the Order of Precedence of Private Members' Business, be withdrawn and replaced by Motion M-294 in the name of Mrs. Guay (Laurentides), which is listed in today's *Notice Paper*.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(Motion withdrawn.)

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, could the Government House Leader please tell us what is on the agenda for the next few days?

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to make my statement, which is quite straightforward. I think the Deputy Prime Minister will agree with me on this.