

*The Address*

• (1200)

After the decision has been made will the selection criteria and the respective bids by the respective cities be made public? Who makes the final decision?

**Ms. Coppes:** Mr. Speaker, we intend to have the process public and transparent throughout. The final decision will be made by the Government of Canada.

I should also point out that in doing the analysis the independent consultant will be working without political input by any of the ministers. The assessment rating areas that have been set out, including environmental record, infrastructure, et cetera, will be done without identifying the individual cities.

[Translation]

**Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by congratulating the Deputy Prime Minister on her election.

I think that what the hon. member said about the environment in her speech is very important, but she mentioned earlier the importance of the family and the United Nations International Year of the Family, as well as the importance of equality for women.

I would like to ask the Deputy Prime Minister a question on plans for a national child care system because it is absolutely fundamental when dealing with the issue of the family and especially for women. I would like to ask her what plans exactly her government has regarding a national child care system?

**Ms. Coppes:** Mr. Speaker, it certainly goes to show what good, considerate people we are in this country when you see the hon. member for Yukon ask a question to the member for Hamilton in the other official language, and I thank her for that.

With regard to day care, of course we have a specific policy. As soon as the economy has grown by 3 per cent, we plan to open 150,000 new day care spaces within 3 years. That was clearly indicated in our red book, and there is no doubt that the Prime Minister will fulfil the promises made in that book.

[English]

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt):** Mr. Speaker, I am humbly aware of the great privilege bestowed upon me by the people of Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt in electing me to speak for them in this venerable Chamber. I congratulate the 66,000 voters of my riding for taking part in Canadian history with the arrival of 52 Reformers to this place.

On behalf of the people of Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt I wish to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to congratulate members of the government and all hon. colleagues

on their election to the House of Commons to represent the voices of their constituents.

Canadians have become cynical about their government. They have become suspicious of their representatives who have too often ignored the voices of their constituents. We in this 35th Parliament have a duty to restore their faith. On January 6, in a ceremony in my riding, I swore an additional oath to represent my constituents faithfully in the House. It is my earnest intention to do just that.

The people of Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt look to us for prudence, wisdom and fairness in our decisions. They look to us to work together for the benefit of all Canadians. They look to this Parliament for the vision to create a future for them, not of bankruptcy or division but of promise and opportunity.

Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt is an area of honest, industrious and hardworking Canadians. The riding extends from the rolling ranch lands of the Nicola Valley, through the lush orchards and vineyards of the Okanagan, through the rich forests of the boundary country. It is an area of ranches, farms, orchards, mountains, lakes, peaceful towns and small quiet cities. Traditionally we have benefited from the bounty of our minerals, forests, agricultural lands, tourist attractions and of course the best climate in Canada, something which I have come to greatly appreciate this past week.

• (1205)

Today however the riding faces many challenges. It suffers from high unemployment, as much as 2 per cent higher than the provincial rate. We face changes in the structure of our economy as technology and global competition impact on our industries. We see our young people leaving in search of employment. The bright spot in this picture has been our small businesses and the jobs they have created.

Today I am choosing to comment on the government's legislative program from the perspective of Canadians who are looking for economic hope and recovery. These are issues of great importance to the people of my constituency. I commend this government for talking about job creation which Canadians so clearly need. I support this goal.

I do not however believe that government is the best vehicle for this job creation. For some time now small business has created the majority of new jobs in Canada. For example, in the decade up to 1990 while big business was busy downsizing and laying off employees, Canada's small businesses created 85 per cent of the net new jobs in the country. That represents 2.2 million jobs. In the future small business will be even more important as our economy restructures.

However it is often government that stifles this very job creation. Overregulation, onerous taxation, poorly conceived and administered programs all have drastic effects on small